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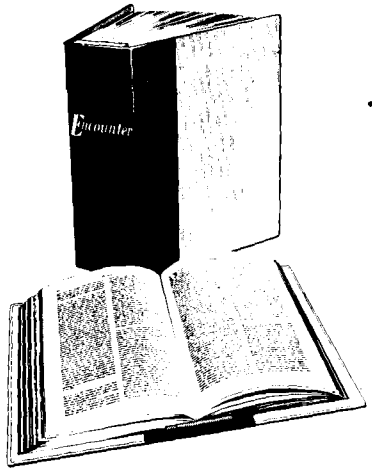


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# Encounter

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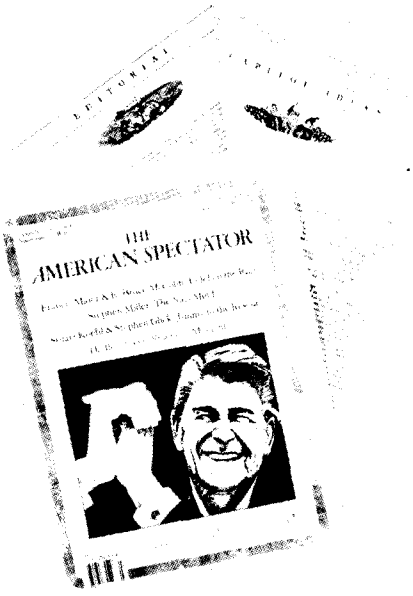


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# *Ahdaf Soueif*

# *The Apprentice*

IT IS LATE SPRING. The sea lies smooth and quiet. The Cataract Gardens are settling into the evening, and gracious buildings in old yellow stone glow quietly in the fading light. Two of these buildings stand close together, divided by a narrow, but treed, alley. The side of one of them is blind, and on it hangs a huge billboard. It carries a crude drawing of a giant bed with a bare mattress. On the mattress a woman lies in a classic "sexy" pose: prone, both legs bent at the knee and raised, ankles crossed. She rests on her elbows and smiles into the black telephone receiver she holds with one hand. A disconnected wire dangles from the receiver. Her other hand toys idly with a strand of yellow hair. She wears a striped green and white dress with a deep décolletage and high-heeled green open shoes with ankle straps. The legend over her head reads: "I *always* prefer Dunlop."

Down in the alley, by a shallow, spreading puddle, stands a boy. He is small and dark. He is dressed in faded striped green pyjama trousers and a torn brown nylon T-shirt. He wears brown plastic sandals and he is gazing up at the vision on the billboard, his mouth half open in a dazed smile. He never even hears the horn, and the orange and black taxi has to swerve as it swings into the alley spattering him with mud. The driver leans out of the window: "Wake up you donkey son of a dog. Can't you hear the horn?"

The boy turns away from the Dunlop lady and gazes after the taxi. Then he starts to walk. He walks up the narrow alley and when he comes to the main street he turns right. He makes his way west, away from the mellow fashionable part of Alexandria, towards the harbour area where the crooked houses huddle together and the streets smell of fish and dust.

IN A LARGE, LIGHT, SPARKLING KITCHEN a stout woman in a peasant smock stands by the sink drying the silverware. As she finishes each knife, fork or spoon she lays it down carefully in an open, compartmented, green-baize-lined drawer. When she has put away the last one, she closes the drawer and lays the tea-towel out to dry on the towel rack. Then she walks over to the kitchen door and takes down the long, loose, black dress hanging behind it. She pulls it on over her head and smooths it down over the flowered smock. She bends down and reaches under the fridge for her slippers. Holding them in one hand, she takes down her black tarha and wraps it round her head. Then she tucks her slippers under her arm and pads on thick brown feet out into the corridor. She turns left, then left again into a shaded, chintzy sitting-room with french windows open on to a wide balcony overlooking the sea. Toys of a hundred bright colours lie scattered on the white rug and deep in a turquoise armchair a young woman nurses a small child. Her embroidered white dressing-gown is open and the baby's small black head nestles cosily against her breast. Her slippered feet rest on the seat of a small chair.

"Is there anything else you want, Set Nadia?"

The young woman looks up, smiling. "Have you finished, Om Yosri?"

"Yes."

"All right. Thank you. No, I don't think there's anything else. You'll get the white aubergines in the morning?"

"God willing."

"Good."

She looks down at her baby. "How's your back today?"

"It's better, thanks be to God. I still get a twinge now and then but, thanks be to God, it's



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better."

"You must carry on with the treatment, you know."

"Yes of course. I know."

Om Yosri nods vigorously.

"All right then. Go in safety."

"God keep you safe."

Halfway down the corridor, she hears her name called. "Yes? Yes, Set Nadia?"

Hurrying back. "I say, Om Yosri, has your boy found work yet?" "Who? Yosri? No. No, not yet." She makes a helpless gesture with her free hand and folds it with the other across her stomach as she launches into a favourite grievance. "I don't know what to do with him. I apprenticed him to an electrician, but he only lasted three days. They said they had no use for him. And the same in the car repair shop. His mind isn't on it. But he's not stupid. He never had any trouble at school. . . ."

"You should have let him stay on. He would have learnt something. . . ."

"What would he have learnt, Set Nadia? How to be a gentleman? Don't take it badly, but gentlemen can't make enough to eat these days. I want him to learn a trade."

"How old is he now?"

"Fourteen, may I live to see your son his age."

"Oh. I thought he was younger. When he came here the other day, I thought he looked quite delicate."

"God bless you, Set Nadia. He told me how you made him come in and eat. 'She's such a kind, beautiful lady, Mother', he said to me. 'The most beautiful lady I've ever seen'. . . ."

"Well, look, Om Yosri. Monsieur Hassan, my hairdresser, is looking for a boy to work in the Salon. He'll start by cleaning the shop and running errands, but he'll get good tips and he'll learn a trade. And hairdressers make gold, you know. What do you say?"

"Why not? I've tried him at men's jobs and he can't get on. Maybe he'll get on at the hairdresser's."

"Right, then. We're agreed. Bring him with you tomorrow morning and I'll take him with me to the Salon."

"God preserve your children for you, Set Nadia. We're loaded with your favours. . . ."

"And, Om Yosri, *don't* let him wear those striped pyjamas. Hasn't he got a pair of trousers?"

"No, I swear, Set Nadia. You know how it is: his eldest brother steals everything he can lay his hands on. He'll steal the kohl from my eye if. . . ."

"All right, all right. I'll see what I can do. Just bring him with you in the morning."

Om Yosri closed the door softly behind her and slowly climbed down the stairs. She came out of the building and turned right, then right again into the treed alley. She did not notice the smiling Dunlop lady but walked heavily westward towards the harbour.

ON A WARM MORNING in early summer, a young boy stands outside the heavy, smoked-glass doors of the Salon Romance. He is dressed in blue-jeans, a light blue cotton T-shirt and a pair of brown leather sandals. He is hanging out large, soft, lilac towels with purple edging. He lays them out carefully on the mobile clothes-horse, stretching and caressing away every crease. He looks up at the bright sun: they should be dry in no time. Then he opens the dark door and steps back inside.

The Salon stands at the entrance of a small cul-de-sac on one of the gentle hills of downtown Alexandria. Standing in front of it you can—if you crane a little—see the Mediterranean. The other end of the street, the dead one, has been annexed by the car-repair shop, and various machines stand around with yawning hoods while men and boys in greasy overalls attend to them with drills, paint and polish. There is a government Co-op and there is also the coffee-shop which services both the Salon and the garage.

The boy must have noticed all this when he first came here. But now it is as if he no longer sees it, so engrossed is he in his work in the Salon Romance.

As he enters the Salon, he has to stand for a moment blinking. Then his eyes adjust to the dim light and he threads his way through the hum of voices and the clink of instruments and round the curving white dressing-tables to the back of the room. He pushes aside the purple and gold bead curtain and goes into the office. He takes a brass tray from where it stands in a corner and goes out into the salon. He wanders around quietly collecting used coffee cups and tea glasses. In the street, he transfers them to a battered tin tray and leaves them outside the door for the boy from the coffee-shop to collect.

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Then he makes another round. Crystal ashtrays overflow with slim, lipstick-stained, gold-banded stubs. For the hundredth time he marvels at the invention of the Creator: even their cigarette stubs are different.

Monsieur Hassan, moving towards the cash desk with a departing customer, looked around. It was a good day. But then, *all* days were good at the Salon Romance. He had been right to splash out on the décor. That was what the ladies wanted, and whatever the ladies wanted, he made sure they got. And what they wanted most of all was a change. A little holiday in a different, dramatic, make-believe world. Ah, Monsieur Hassan understood them so well.

"A canopy?" his wife had repeated. "A lilac canopy draped over the ceiling? Why?"

"Just make it", he had snapped. "I'm not asking you to understand it. Just to make it."

"Two S-shaped dressing-tables in the middle of the floor? Whatever for?" his friends had asked. "What's wrong with the old side-by-side arrangement along the wall?"

"This is different", he had said. "And more—" he searched for a word, "more intimate."

Purple, velour-covered armchairs under the hair-dryers, purple and gold Italian ceramic floor-tiles; rose-tinted mirrors. And the lighting, lighting was so important; the dark, heavy glass of the shop-front tamed the sun's rays and protected the privacy of the salon. Trained spotlights illuminated crucial working areas but left many discreet shadows where the ladies could whisper, rest, or dream. And it had worked. Look at them now: the four seats at the dressing-tables were full, and so were two of the dryers; Madame Nadia was having her hair washed; Madame Aisha and Mademoiselle Mimi, in Alexandria for the summer, were sitting with old Madame Angèle waiting to begin. And the staff: all of them busy. He would soon have to get a second manicurist. Also the new boy was doing well. Madame Nadia had done him a good turn there. The boy was good-looking. And quiet. Too quiet? Well, the ladies like him. And he's smart and works hard: ashtrays, cups, glasses, wiping surfaces, sweeping hair off the floor, handing out rollers. Maybe he'll liven up when he gets used to things. He still goes round looking dazed, like now, taking Mademoiselle Mimi's coffee-cup—"No, no. Leave it, Yosri. Madame Angèle is going to tell my fortune. Aren't you, Madame?"

Madame Angèle raised her thin, pencilled eyebrows, "*Chérie*, did I not tell you I prefer the Tarot?"

"But Madame, you promised", Mimi pouted. "Last time you were at our place you promised. . . ."

"I was ready to read your cards then. But didn't you whisper, 'Not in front of Maman'? What would poor Safi have done to you?"

"Madame Angèle, please, *please* read the cup."

The old lady turned to Aisha and sighed. She turned back to the small china cup and put out her right hand: pick it up, swirl it round, turn it over. . . .

YOSRI OPENED the door of the Salon and put another tray on the pavement outside. The cup-rims were stained with a variety of different coloured lipsticks: pink and red and plum and—he went back inside. From the office he picked up his brush and pan, then he went to the dressing-tables to collect the ladies' discarded hair; shiny black crescents where Mademoiselle Paulette had had her monthly trim, long chestnut locks under the chair where Madame Nadia had finally decided on a rebellious *coup de garçon* and where she was now enjoying a *massage révitalisant*. As he crouched, sweeping, he saw her stretch a bare foot. "This is the best bit in the whole procedure", she murmured.

Pierre, the Coptic styler standing behind her, smiled. "*Merci*, Madame." He settled his finger-tips more firmly on to her wet scalp and rubbed. "A little friction is always good for the circulation", he said in a low, confiding voice. Nadia did not answer. But she smiled and held her head upright and watched him steadily in the mirror. Now his hands were cupping her head; four finger-tips behind each ear, thumbs at the crown, pressing hard, and rubbing slowly, in circles. Slowly she closed her eyes. He shifted his fingers to the back of her neck.

How pretty she was. Just a few weeks ago Yosri had thought she was the prettiest lady in the world, and now his world was full of Set Nadias. No. *Madame* Nadias. And they were all different; some were tall and slender and long-legged, some were small, some were plump and soft and rounded, some were white as cream and some were the colour of the toffee his

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mother had once brought home from a birthday in the big house. Some had long hair and some had short and oh the different ways they wore it and the different colours. And their nails were coloured too. He had never seen feet with painted toenails before. He *had* seen plenty of women's feet, of course. But they'd been different. Madame Nadia's looked so delicate, stretched out on the rail under the dressing-table, arched and tipped with red. If he just put out his hand—"Monsieur Hassan", cried a lady struggling free of a giant hairdryer, "Monsieur Hassan, did they not get any chicken at the Co-op this week? Did you forget I asked you to buy me three pairs?"

"Monsieur Hassan does not care for us any more", complained Madame Aisha. "I've been begging him to put in a word for me at the mechanic's up the road and he's done nothing."

"Oh but I *have*, Madame Aisha", Monsieur Hassan cried. "I *have*. And he says you are welcome to bring your car in. He and his men are at your service. And at the service of all our clients. Shall I book an appointment for you for next week?"

"What a good idea", exclaimed Mimi. "The cars can be serviced while we have our hair done."

"It looks like he's going to get a lot of customers."

"You should charge him a commission, Monsieur Hassan."

Yosri took the dustpanfull of lifeless hair behind the beaded curtain. He lifted the lid off the large grey bin and slowly poured in the hair. Poor, dusty locks. So glorious as they tumbled through Monsieur Hassan's and the other men's fingers, so dull when they came to the bin. He put the lid back and went out to collect the damp towels from around the basins.

For weeks now he has watched the ladies settle soft hips into soft leather, poise their heads delicately on to the sloping head-rests and stream their hair into the lilac basins. Braceleted wrists and jewelled fingers dangle from the arm-rests, surrendered. He has watched the slim, tight-trousered juniors brace themselves behind the basins, feet apart. They hold each head with infinite, yet unworried care; precious eggshells, fragile, yet familiar to their expert hands. They rub and stroke and pull and brush and the ladies lie back with closed eyes and gleaming lips. He has heard them complain when the hand-shower was held over their hair "Oh, oh, that's *far* too hot. Are you trying to burn me?" Or, "Darling, that's *desperately* cold. You'll give me pneumonia." And sometimes, clasping lilac towels to their necks with bright-nailed fingers, "Oooh, the water's running down my back—oh *do* take care." And always the quiet, respectful response, "Of course, Madame."

"What's all this? What's all this?" Madame Gabi had walked through the door. "May God increase and bless it. Every seat taken? Well, Monsieur Hassan, you'll have to start a café on the *trottoir* outside for customers who have to wait. Or would that distract the mechanics next door? Here, Yosri, take my jacket and hang it up. From the loop, mind, not the collar. Or do you have a proper hanger you can put it on? Yes, all right, take it into the office—oh no, no, wait. Heaven knows *what* you keep in there. Leave it out here. I'll put it on the back of Monsieur Hassan's chair. *That*'s right. Now run and fetch me some boiling water from the coffee-shop. Just a glassful of *boiling water*, mind. Don't let them put anything in it. I've got my own tea-bags right here. Run along. Quickly. What a pretty boy he's turning into. Monsieur Hassan, have you been curling his hair?"

"No, no. I assure you. It's natural. We just use the Salon shampoo and conditioner, and it dries like that."

"And that lovely, toasted colour and those sad eyes. He should wear a chain. A gold chain round his neck. He'd look a sugar with a gold chain. . . ."

"He should wear an ear-ring. Men abroad wear ear-rings now, you know. Not a pair, just one." That was Aisha.

"Oh. Those are the you-know-whats. No *real* man would ever wear an ear-ring. . . ."

"Oh yes they do. It's the fashion. And anyway, pirates used to wear them."

"So who says pirates weren't poofs? They used to spend months without women. . . .'

"Ah, but look what they did with the women once they found them. Of course they weren't."

"Maybe they worked both ways. Took what they could find. Sometimes a boy, sometimes a woman. . . ."

"Sometimes a fish." The Salon Romance rang with laughter.

"But what do *you* think, Monsieur Hassan? Shouldn't he wear jewellery?"

"Not an ear-ring, no." Monsieur Hassan smiled. "But perhaps the chain is a good idea.

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It would be a good way for him to save his money, anyway. An investment."

"He can save up his tips."

"He'd have to. He turns all his wages over to his mother."

"Great. Let's have a fund. You put a box on the cash-desk, Monsieur Hassan. Then any lady who wants to tip him can put the money in it. And when there's enough money, we'll buy him a gold chain with a pendant. He'll be the envy of every apprentice on the street."

IT IS A STIFLING September day. Yosri is gathering the towels from the clothes-horse. He has grown taller and wears tight white denims and a dark blue shirt. The shirt is halfway unbuttoned and on his chest a gold chain with a Pisces pendant catches the sun. He is quicker now, less hesitant in his movements. Mimi's green Fiat draws up and he steps forward, smiling, to help her out.

"Your boy has learned quickly", she comments to Monsieur Hassan, as she watches Yosri carry the pile of neatly folded towels into the office.

"Yes. He's a good boy. I let him lock up shop now after we've all gone. And he's the first one here in the morning. He's bright. He's been practising washing the assistants' hair and they think he's getting quite good."

"You'll have to let him try a client, soon."

"Yes, I know. But we'll have to wait until someone brings in a child, or we get some passing trade or something. I can't let him try on one of my regulars."

"Why not? *I'm* willing to try him. If he's no good I'll just call for someone else."

Yosri stood by the basin holding a towel. His day had come. He was going to do it; he was going to touch one of them. Mademoiselle Mimi with the light brown hair, the wide hips and the slim ankles. He watched her settle into the chair, then he bent and draped the towel carefully round her shoulders, and she, smiling, put up her hands and tucked it into the neck of her turquoise shirt. With both hands he lifted the long hair from her nape and she laid her head back against the head-rest and closed her eyes.

He planted his feet firmly apart and turned on the hand-shower. He tested the water on his hand, adjusting the temperature till it was pleasantly cool but with no edge of coldness. He let it play on his hand till he was sure it was constant, then he started gently watering Mimi's hair. He held the hand-shower over the top of her brow, cupping it so that the water would not stream over her face. Then he moved it to the back of her head. He parted the dampened hair and gently pushed the shower into it, making sure it got soaked through. He put the shower down in the basin and poured some cold shampoo into his hand. He kept it there for a moment to warm it, then he lightly rubbed his hands together and passed them over the hair. Then he started to rub: he rubbed the scalp, he lifted strands of hair and rubbed them carefully against each other and let them fall.

He took up his hand-shower and rinsed. Again the shampoo. This time he worked it into a full and foamy lather. And now his fingers slid easily in and out of the slippery hair; he massaged the top of the head, and the back, and both sides, then the back again. He watched his fingers emerge from the soapy hair at both sides of Mimi's head and reach towards the ears; two slim middle fingers found the small earholes and poked curiously, delicately in. He pressed himself against the back of the basin. The skin behind her ears was so fine and smooth and stretched so taut over the fragile bone. He pressed, and his fingers slid into the little soft hollow just behind each lobe.

"Shall I leave the shampoo on the hair a couple of minutes, Mademoiselle?" he asked, bending over her.

"Yes" Mimi whispered, without opening her eyes.

He swept the hair up and settled it in one foaming mass on the top of her head. Slowly and tenderly he dried her forehead and temples with a piece of cotton-wool. Then he went into the office.

He leaned against the wall, his hands pushing deep into his pockets. He had never felt this before; every drop of his blood racing towards one focal point, leaving his legs weak and his mind hazy. How was he going to get through the day? Would they all notice? It was wonderful. More wonderful than anything he'd ever dreamed or read about. But he had to go. He had to go. She was waiting for him. He levered himself away from the wall, pulled his hands from his pockets and took up his position behind the basin.

Later, holding the lilac towel to her neck,

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Mimi addressed Monsieur Hassan in the styling mirror: "The boy is a born coiffeur; he has a real feeling for hair."

Monsieur Hassan, deftly smoothing wet hair on to large, pink rollers, smiled. "Thanks be to God. His heart's in the job."

"Yosri", called the manicure girl, "fill a pedicure basin for Madame Gabi."

Yosri filled a purple plastic tub with tepid water, added a squirt of detergent and a drop of a jasmine essence. He carried it carefully into the salon and put it at Madame Gabi's feet as she sat under the dryer. She shook off her shoes and slipped her feet into the water. Then she pushed the dryer off her head.

"So you were telling me. He asked her to go home with him?" She turned to the plump blonde sitting beside her, hands spread on her knees waiting for her nails to dry.

"Oh yes", she nodded, "and he explicitly said he had some naughty films he could show her."

"Hah. And . . . ?"

"Well, you know Zizi. She looks so *douce* and *bien élevée*. But she's really tough underneath, and she said 'Go home with *you*? Not likely. I know all about you and how *tu aime frapper les femmes*'."

"Heavens! What did *he* say?"

"Nothing. His face went white and he turned round and walked out. He's not been to the office since."

"Poor man. *Non, vraiment.* I pity him. After all, a lot of men are like that. And, *entre nous*, it's not *that* bad. . . ."

"No, no, my dear. You don't understand." The blonde, fingers still carefully spread out, leaned forward and placed a hand on her friend's knee. "There is a difference. A lot of men . . . *avant, oui, peut-être. Mais* **aprés***? Jamais. C'est du perversion, alors!*"

THE LAST CUSTOMER, coiffed and happy, had departed. Monsieur Hassan and his assistants had washed their faces, combed their hair, and left in a jangle of car and motorcycle keys. Yosri was alone in the Salon Romance with the final job of locking up. He looked around him: crystal ashtrays overflowed with lipstick-stained cigarette ends, locks of hair gathered dust on the tiled floor, damp towels lay draped over the arms of chairs, pink rollers frothed blowsily out of their wicker baskets, and an empty shampoo bottle oozed its last golden viscous drops into the lilac basin. It would take at least an hour to clear up. He felt strange. The immediate urge which had possessed him so strongly in the afternoon had passed and now he was tired and reflective. The day which had been so hot and heavy had turned, no doubt, into a benign and breezy evening. He would clear up the salon early tomorrow morning and now he would just walk slowly home. He would walk along the corniche. He had some money in his pocket, for now that the chain had been bought, the ladies were giving him his tips in cash—till they thought up some other scheme. He could stop along the way and have a sandwich and a glass of sugar-cane juice. And he could think about what had happened.

He moved around the salon switching off the spotlights. In the dark, he collected the keys and made for the door. As he reached it, it opened and the doorway was filled by a large figure. Yosri could not see clearly, for what light there was came from the dim streetlamp outside and the stranger was blocking most of it. He could only see him in silhouette. Then he made out the overalls and heavy shoes and knew it was one of the mechanics from the garage up the street. But which one? Did he know him? He knew none of them really. And why had he come here? The man stepped aside and let the heavy door swing shut. It locked into place as he leant back against it. Why did he not speak? A sudden heavy weight formed in the boy's stomach and he felt his legs go weak and warm. His palms were sweating and he dug his hands into his pockets. The man took one slow step forward and reached out. His hand brushed against the boy's chest as he carefully took hold of the chain and began stroking the golden fish with his thumb.

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*Alun Chalfont*

# Stormy Atlantic Weather

## *Americans, Europeans & the Alliance*

ONE OF THE MOST significant ingredients of contemporary political attitudes in Western Europe is a pervasive and often virulent anti-Americanism. The banners and placards of the bedraggled columns shuffling through the streets of our cities under the euphemistic rubric of "peace movements" proclaim a variety of messages—anarchist, communist, unilateralist, and pacifist. But the most strident voices are those which demand the removal of American bases from Europe, evidently under the impression that our cities are under threat from *Pershings* and not from *SS-20s*.

This is depressing, but not surprising. For some time it has been possible to discern, in the pronouncements of the more fashionable gurus of press, radio and television, a tendency to adopt a position of magisterial objectivity as between the free world and the totalitarian ideologies which threaten it. The confused rhetoric which characterises the debate about the nuclear arms race, *détente*, and the North-South dialogue has succeeded in anaesthetising and indoctrinating a whole generation, so that it has become incapable of distinguishing between reality and fantasy, between the fireman and the fire.

Writing of that modishly boring concept "the generation gap" (not in *Pravda* or in *The Guardian* but in *The Times*), Mr Gerald Kaufman (a prominent Labour politician, not by any means on the extreme wing of his party) says of young people that

> "defence policy cannot be justified to them as essential for deterring the Russians who . . . have never presented themselves to these teenagers as a direct threat to Britain's survival. To these young people, a greater justification for an independent British nuclear capability than a theoretical Soviet threat will have to be proved . . . ."

One is driven to ask, how then can defence policy be justified to them at all? What greater justification than the "theoretical" Soviet threat could possibly be advanced for maintaining Britain's nuclear deterrent? The logic of Mr Kaufman's demoralising kind of argument is that young people are not only horrified by the possible effects of a nuclear war (a reaction which they share with the more geriatric end of the human spectrum); they have apparently gone further and concluded that the only solution is unilateral disarmament for Britain—not only nuclear, but conventional as well. If that is really so, it is largely because politicians and publicists of radical persuasion have sown the seeds of the logical fallacy which lies at the heart of their reasoning.

THE NEXT STEP is predictable—indeed, inevitable. Once the "plague-on-both-of-your-houses" heresy is established in the receptive public mind, it no longer seems perverse to suggest that the threat to world peace comes not from an aggressive and expansionist Soviet Union, or even from an uncontrollable military competition between two demented superpowers, but from the United States of America and its trigger-happy President. Indeed, a television critic in a national newspaper, evidently writing with the gears of his mind disengaged, recently declared that a television programme presented by the ineffable Mr Jonathan Dimbleby had demonstrated that "the real threat to peace comes not from the Kremlin, but from the man in the cowboy suit."

LORD CHALFONT *was a regular columnist on military affairs for "The Times" before serving in Prime Minister Harold Wilson's Cabinet as Minister for European Affairs. He now sits as an Independent in the House of Lords.*



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Leaving aside the psychopathology of the endless cheap jibes at President Reagan's background, it is interesting to trace the provenance of the new crusade against the Americans. Partly, of course, it springs from the instinctive hostility of the weak towards the strong, the poor towards the rich, the vacillating towards the resolute and decisive. It is interesting to remark that when President Carter was careering about like a loose cannon on a heaving deck, giving the United States a global reputation for bumbling ineptitude, anti-Americanism took a holiday.

It is true, of course, that President Reagan's tendency to make statements which have not been passed through a series of public relations filters provides his enemies and those of his country with excellent ammunition. When he says that it is possible to envisage a "limited nuclear war" in Europe, the pacifist-neutralist industry sets up a howl of execration. Yet he is only enunciating, with imprudent clarity, the assumption upon which the defensive strategy of NATO has been based for twenty years. If the doctrine of "flexible response" or "graduated deterrence" means anything at all, it postulates a sequence of events in which the Soviet Union launches a conventional military attack on western Europe; inferior NATO conventional forces are incapable of containing it; "battlefield" or "tactical" nuclear weapons are used; whereupon the Soviet Union, convinced of the determination of the West to resist, abandons its aggression. In other words, there has been a nuclear exchange limited to the European theatre. This may not be a very convincing basis upon which to construct a defensive strategy. Indeed, it is very unlikely that a war ever *could* be limited in this way. It seems, however, perverse to vilify the President of the United States because he is indiscreet enough to identify the underlying assumption of NATO's collectively agreed defensive strategy. It is interesting, too, that in the uproar which greeted the American President's unguarded comment on the possibility of limited nuclear war in Europe, one important fact seemed to go unremarked—namely, that a war of *any* kind in Europe will occur only as a result of Russian aggression; and as Russian strategists have never left any doubt that they regard nuclear weapons as legitimate instruments of war, Western concern about NATO's plans for limiting their use seems curiously misplaced.

When the President says that the gas pipe-line project will do nothing to discourage the Soviet Union from presiding over the enslavement of Poland, while it will increase Western Europe's dependence upon Russian energy sources, the latent chauvinism of the Europeans is given full and petulant expression. Yet he is only stating a self-evident truth. Energy development, is, after all, one of the critical factors in the Soviet economy. Without the gas pipe-line project, the Soviet Union in its chronic need for hard currency might well be forced to increase its exports of oil to the West, at the expense of its heavily subsidised supplies to its East European empire. This would cause a further decline in economic growth in the Warsaw Pact countries, a prospect which must cause some alarm in the Kremlin, which is already faced with a state of rebellion in Poland. The United States, it seems, is making the quite reasonable point that it can scarcely be in the long-term interests of the Western alliance to close the Russians' own "window of vulnerability" while they are devoting so much effort to ensure that ours is kept wide open.

WE HAVE, THEREFORE, reached a most alarming state of affairs. Not only is the Western alliance blundering into a crisis; it is also persuading itself that most, if not all, of the fault lies with the Americans. It is consequently not only acceptable, but in some circles almost mandatory, to characterise Americans as naive and dangerous militarists, propping up unsavoury dictatorships, provoking and perpetuating a mindless arms race while attempting to bully their more civilised and sophisticated European allies into accepting an uncomplicated view of the world in which the only enemy is Communism and the only way to defeat it is "the Bomb." The truth is, in fact, somewhat different.

In the first place, those who direct American policy at the highest level are of a calibre to which very few European countries can aspire. Not only are Cabinet members like Caspar Weinberger and George Shultz men of prudence and intelligence; with them in the Pentagon and the State Department are influential figures like John Lehman, the Secretary of the Navy, and Eugene Rostow, the Head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, whose imaginative ability and sheer technical grasp of their subject are matched by very few of their counterparts in the whole of Western Europe. This is, to some extent, a reflection of a broader phenomenon in the defence and foreign policy establishment of the United States. Exter-

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nal policies are distilled not only from official advice but from the collective intelligence of a number of independent institutions. These "think tanks", contrary to the received wisdom of radical chic, are not collections of wild-eyed maniacs calculating "megadeaths" and playing "war games" with strategic missiles; they are, for the most part, responsible and highly qualified engineers and mathematicians, chemists and physicists, applying rigorous scientific analysis to problems which in Europe are left to a handful of professionals and a small army of enthusiastic amateurs. The level of intellectual and scientific resource devoted to strategic policy formulation in the United States has virtually no parallel in Western Europe. Not only do these men and women, who are experts in the original and unpejorative sense of the word, publish politico-strategic studies of considerable importance; they also carry out highly classified work for government departments. Many of them, indeed, move in and out of government posts, depending on the complexion of the administration in power.

It would, thus, be appropriate for observers in Western Europe, where the record of wisdom in international affairs is by no means a matter for uncritical admiration, to pause before dismissing the Americans as a rabble of frontiersmen and their President as a "B"-film baddie. In Britain, this particular brand of patronising hostility is especially unbecoming. When we were recently engaged in a confrontation with Argentina, which culminated in a vicious little war, the behaviour of the United States was crucial. At first, they made a series of careful attempts at mediation, based upon the justifiable calculation that America was the only nation with both the power and the credibility to bring about a peaceful solution over the Falkland Islands; and when mediation failed, they came down unequivocally on the side of their NATO ally, providing secret intelligence, logistic reinforcement and moral support on a scale which was certainly influential, if not decisive, in the eventual outcome of the war in the South Atlantic.

It is important to recognise, furthermore, that this took place against the background of a shift of emphasis in American strategic perceptions which is of decisive importance for the future of the Western alliance. For over thirty years, United States foreign policy has rested securely on the

## *Hate is Love (i.e. War is Peace)*

YOUNG RUSSIANS *are under ideological attack from the west and must be taught more intensively to hate their "class enemies" in the capitalist world.*

*The latest issue of* Young Communist, *the Communist Youth League journal, records the views of teachers, youth leaders, ideologists and sociologists at a discussion about the upbringing of young people.*

**MR A. I. GAVRIKOV, a researcher at the Soviet Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, says: "While raising young people as fighters for peace we have no right to leave out of their moral make-up an active, irreconcilable acute hatred towards class enemies.**

**"One thing is clear: we must be more energetic in reading class irreconcilability, class hatred of exploitation, militarism and reactionaries. This is a noble feeling, inseparable from socialist humanism. What could be more humane than the struggle against the evil which serves the cause of exploitation of man by man."**

MR GAVRIKOV AND *other speakers accused the Western Powers of conducting a campaign of subversion against Soviet youth, particularly through radio broadcasts.*

**"THE CHANNELS of influence on our children and teenagers do not end with radio propaganda," added Mr Gavrikov. "We also have consumer goods, hot music, political jokes and even toys. We can see our children playing with toys they never had before: toy soldiers in American Navy uniforms, plastic copies of Nato pistols.**

**"We must cultivate in our youth the ability to recognise a class enemy no matter what image it assumes.**

**"MANY PEOPLE do not sense an enemy in the BBC announcer who is cheerfully talking into the microphone about hit songs. They do not realise the ideological hostility of religion and they thoughtlessly pay attention to all kinds of rumours and cock and bull stories."**

PROF Y. NOZHKIN, *of the Academy of Social Sciences, calls for a large-scale effort to "discredit hostile propaganda."*

*The West is using propaganda to camouflage the military and strategic plans of the United States, he claims, and to*

**"undermine the moral potential of the Soviet Union and socialist countries as potential enemies in a future war."**

**"The enemy's designs are serious. It has even stopped trying to disguise its intentions. Reagan openly wants to finish with Communism."**

*Prof. Nozhkin says young people who "blindly trust this glib poison, speculation and misinformation" coming from the West "must be told precisely and categorically: there is no middle position, you cannot remain on both sides of the barricade."*

*Nigel Wade*

in the DAILY TELEGRAPH *(London)*

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assumption that, to use a somewhat melodramatic image, the River Elbe is one of the frontiers of the United States. In other words, there has been an almost unchallenged consensus that one of the critical areas of American security lies in Europe and the Atlantic. It is upon this foundation that the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was built; it is for this reason that the United States keeps 350,000 troops in Europe, including more than 200,000 soldiers in Germany, partly as an element of conventional military defence, and partly as a "hostage force" to demonstrate the validity of the American nuclear guarantee.

IN RECENT YEARS much has happened to cast doubt upon this central set of assumptions. Many percipient observers decline to accept the credibility of "extended deterrence", and the validity of the theory of the American nuclear umbrella has always been suspect. To many Americans, however, it poses the very real danger that some day an American President might have to respond to a Russian attack on West Germany by "pressing the button" and initiating a nuclear exchange in which American cities would almost certainly be included in the list of targets. Furthermore, the Soviet threat has long since ceased to be a simple matter of the red hordes pouring through France and Germany "down to the Channel ports." Viet Nam, Afghanistan, Yemen and Angola have demonstrated the global reach of Russian foreign policy, powerfully supported by maritime forces which have developed in thirty years to provide not only a formidable naval presence across the sea lanes of the world, but also a capacity for the distant application of military force which is unmatched by any other world power.

*'Better tell the pope, too: We won't stand for any meddling in the affairs of us Poles.'*

The latest development in this context has been the emergence of a pattern of Communist penetration in Latin America. For many Americans, rightly or wrongly, events in Nicaragua and El Salvador are seen as the early warnings of a political transformation which might soon pose a direct threat to the security of the southern United States. The crudest reaction to this new perception is a demand, growing in insistence, for the withdrawal of American forces from Europe—a "bring-the-boys-home" movement which, however precarious may be its foundation in military logic, has a powerful emotive appeal. At a more sophisticated level the concept of "global unilateralism" is gaining in strength. In essence, this postulates an American foreign policy liberated from entangling and institutionalised alliances, free to seek its friends and allies pragmatically and to construct security policies more relevant to the pervasive and global nature of the threat. It is a modified form of traditional "isolationism" which would not necessarily exclude defence arrangements with *some* Western European countries, but which would almost certainly signal the end of the historic North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in its present form.

BEFORE ANYONE of radical persuasion begins to indicate too openly his pleasure at this prospect, it might be salutary to point out that if it happens, one of the cardinal aims of Soviet foreign policy will have been achieved. To engage in the debate about whether the Russians have a "strategic master plan" or whether their policies are governed by a "flexible opportunism" is a sterile occupation. The dangers for the free world are the same in either case.

What is clear beyond any reasonable doubt is that Russian long-term aims include a number of identifiable elements. One of these is to bring about the disintegration of NATO and the separation of Western Europe from the United States as a necessary prelude to the "Finlandisation" of

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Western Europe.[1] (The Finns understandably resent the term, but perhaps they will permit its use in this context to identify in shorthand a political concept which is fully understood by the rest of the world.)

The Soviet Union, therefore, has good reason to be pleased with what is happening inside NATO. The catalogue of "misunderstandings" is endless. The United States, with the approval of most of its allies, and indeed at the express request of some, makes plans for the deployment of enhanced radiation warheads in Europe; there is, at once, an uproar against the "neutron bomb"—described by the mentally enfeebled as a "capitalist weapon" (i.e. designed to kill people but preserve property).[2] Next, in an attempt (however misguided) to redress the geopolitical impact of the Russian *SS-20* missile, the Americans propose to station Cruise missiles in certain Western European countries. Immediately the "peace" industry begins its predictable uproar. Steel exports, the gas pipe-line, the activities of multinational corporations—all add fuel to the great bonfire of suspicion, misunderstanding, and open hostility which is being carefully kindled between the United States and its European allies. Only the weather seems to be excluded from the radical litany of American deficiencies and excesses—an omission which will undoubtedly be repaired in the fullness of time.

THE RISE OF neutralism and anti-Americanism in Western Europe has an especially piquant flavour when considered in the context of the confrontation between the world's two principal political, ideological, and economic groupings.

The Soviet Union is a police state controlled by a totalitarian dictatorship; denial of human rights is institutionalised, any sign of dissent is brutally suppressed. Its central assumption is that the human individual exists to serve the state, and not the state to serve the individual. Freedom, to generations of Russians, has been (and still is) an unreal and alien concept. These propositions may seem to be self-evident—they describe, indeed, the distinctive characteristics of any society which attempts to elevate the moral squalor and intellectual bankruptcy of Marxism-Leninism into a political system. Yet it is necessary to insist upon them because the Soviet Union openly declares its desire to impose this system on the rest of the world, and has consistently demonstrated that it is prepared, if it seems necessary and feasible, to use force to do so.

[1] See Walter Laqueur, "The Specter of Finlandisation", *Commentary* (December 1977), and Melvin J. Lasky, "From Helsinki to Moscow", ENCOUNTER (August 1979).

[2] The "people" it is designed to kill are the tank commanders and their crews leading an invading force; the "property" it is designed to protect are the towns and cities of "the environment" so that populations could continue to live in them.

## *Alliance "Adrift"*

*London*

THERE *has been a striking reversal in the British public's view of the "Atlantic Alliance." In June they saw Britain and America tending to draw closer together. Now a majority see the two countries drifting apart.*

*That was before last week's announcement by the United States that it would vote for the Argentine-Latin American UN resolution on the Falklands. Not only is the relationship in the doldrums but so is the British view of President Reagan, with only one in four seeing him as a good president.*

*These are some of the main findings of a recent Gallup Poll.*

IT WOULD APPEAR *that the support given to Britain by America in the Falklands crisis engendered the feeling that the two countries were drawing closer together (50%). The controversy over the Russian pipeline has reversed this feeling (23%).*

*Given this background it is not surprising that the British public have little general confidence in either America or its President, though past Gallup readings have shown that the British have more confidence in the American people than is true of most European nations.*

**Replies to the question: "How much confidence do you have in the ability of the United States to deal wisely with present world problems—very great, considerable, little or very little?" were**

| | *Today* | *June* |
|---|---|---|
| *Very great* | 3 | 6 |
| *Considerable* | 22 | 26 |
| *Little* | 31 | 27 |
| *Very little* | 25 | 25 |
| *None at all* | 13 | 13 |
| *Don't know* | 6 | 3 |

*This latest Gallup Poll was carried out among a nationally representative quota sample of 943 electors in more than 95 districts in Great Britain, between October 27 and November 1.*

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

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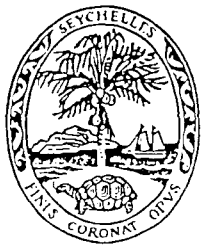
It may come as something of a surprise to a generation brought up on a diet of cynical and carefully orchestrated disinformation to learn that the United States is, on the other hand, the original model of modern democracy. Its political system is constructed upon a liberal compromise between the demands of freedom and order; its government is open, and its press sometimes embarrassingly independent. Its society has none of the residual class preoccupations of many Western European countries, and although its people are refreshingly non-deferential there is a broad and powerful base of national pride and patriotism. One of the constant surprises for the European visitor is the sight of 30,000 people in a football or tennis stadium standing in silence for the national anthem—a spectacle which would attract the derisive contempt of the rabble which turns European football grounds into battle-grounds, and which greets its national anthem with jeers and obscenities.

THERE IS, as far as I am aware, no evidence that the United States plan to use military force to expand their influence or to impose their political system upon the rest of the world. The military alliance of which America is the leader and the central power is entirely defensive—a proposition demonstrable by its nature, its strategic doctrines and its deployment. Simply to write these sentences is to be conscious that they are statements of the obvious; yet it is clearly necessary to go on writing them as long as there are people in the free world who are, at best, unable to make moral distinctions between the two conflicting systems and, at worst, disposed to vilify and blackguard the country upon which we depend, ultimately, for the preservation of our own liberties. For this is the simple fact. If the Western alliance continues to disintegrate; and if the United States retreats into its carapace of "global unilateralism", withdrawing its military presence from Europe and engaging a bilateral relationship with the Soviet

## *The Soviet Navy*




SHORTLY *after this summer's abortive coup in the Seychelles Islands, strategically located astride the vital oil and trade routes of the Indian Ocean, three Russian warships slipped quietly into harbour at Victoria, the capital, and dropped anchor. By all accounts they remained irreproachably neutral while the left-wing government of President Albert René crushed the rebellion with the help of 100 Tanzanian troops flown over from the African mainland.*

*Ten days later, in early September, according to Western intelligence reports, the Soviet flotilla—a destroyer, a Krivak class guided-missile frigate and an auxiliary vessel—sailed out of Victoria to rejoin the battle group now permanently on station in the area.*

**THIS WAS THE SECOND occasion in less than a year that the Russians had used peaceful gunboat diplomacy in the Seychelles. Last November a cruiser and a frigate docked at Victoria, ostensibly to provide "anti-aircraft protection" when a ragged group of South African mercenaries tried and failed to oust President René.**

FOR WESTERN *military planners, worried by spreading Soviet influence in an arc stretching from the east coast of Africa through the Gulf to the Pacific, the repeated presence of Russian gunboats in the Seychelles archipelago underlines two important developments:*

*1. The first is that the Soviet Navy is today deployed worldwide, far from its home ports in the Baltic and the Sea of Japan, and is a major instrument of the Kremlin's diplomacy. 2. The second is that an area of vital economic, strategic and political importance to the West—where first British and now US prestige was predominant—is increasingly coming under pressure from Moscow.*

*Rear-Admiral Sumner Shapiro, the US's Director of Naval Intelligence, maintains that the Russians have taken to heart Oliver Cromwell's axiom that "a man-of-war is the best ambassador" and that its rapidly expanding fleet not only provides a "flexible and convincing instrument of state policy" but also presents a "real and growing threat" to the West.*

**NOWHERE IS THIS more true than off the Asian land masses. The build-up of Soviet naval facilities—from Petropavlosk, a major Russian base north of Japan, through Vietnam to Aden and Ethiopia—poses a direct threat to the sea lanes which carry 90% of Japan's imported oil, 60% of Europe's and 20% of the US's. Defence experts in the US argue that the Russians now have the ability to threaten the free flow of western trade.**

WESTERN CONCERN *over what to do about the rise of Russian forces east of Suez was underlined late last month when India, the largest and most influential Indian Ocean state, joined a chorus calling for the major US-British military base on the tiny island of Diego Garcia to be dismantled and the island returned to Mauritius which, for the first time in 22 years, is under the control of a left-wing government. Diego Garcia was part of Mauritius in British colonial days and is leased to the US as an air force base now capable of taking strategic nuclear bombers. It was from there that President Carter launched the ill-starred mission to rescue the hostages in Iran. The base*

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Union, the countries of Western Europe will have some hard choices to make—and they are not difficult to identify.

One of them has recently been given an airing in a pamphlet written by Mr Robert Jackson, a British Conservative member of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. In it he writes

> "with America on the ebb, Britain faces once again . . . the fact that her central interests are in Europe. A Europe which is forming an identity that in many respects runs counter to American views and short-term interests."

Mr Jackson's description of America "on the ebb" reads strangely against the background of the consensus of informed economic opinion, which, on the evidence of most significant indicators, forecasts a higher growth rate and a lower inflation rate in the 1980s for the United States than for most Western European countries. He is, however, the spokesman for a point of view which is being heard increasingly throughout the European Community and not only on the Left of the political spectrum. Its dream is of some kind of *Festung Europa*, a Europe built in conflict with the United States, but in some mysterious way compatible with the wider community of the West. The concept is disturbingly fragile. There has been no evidence so far that Western Europe is capable even of harmonising and coordinating its foreign policies, much less of forming a political grouping capable of ensuring its own security against military attack.

THERE IS, OF COURSE, another option open to the countries of Western Europe. It is, put in its crudest form, to exchange dependence on the United States for dependence on the Soviet Union—for this, as the Finnish position demonstrates, is one of the risks of neutrality. For those convinced of the pacific intentions of the Soviet Union this

## *Reaches Out*

*is regarded as the pivot of Western military power in the Indian Ocean area.*

**TODAY roughly one-third of the Soviet Union's total land, air and sea forces are assigned to the country's eastern military regions. The Soviet army in the Far East now comprises 500,000 soldiers, 12,000 tanks, 12,500 armoured fighting vehicles, and 5,000 pieces of artillery. The Soviet Pacific fleet, directed by the architect of the Kremlin's policy of global gunboat diplomacy, Admiral Sergei Gorchkov, now deploys 120 attack submarines, 80 surface combat vessels and 300 fighter aircraft. The Russians are also deploying an increasing number of nuclear missiles in the Far East as well as having 1,200 Air Force aircraft.**

**The most recent and perhaps most worrying development for the US is the increasing use made by the Soviet Union of former American facilities at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam. Complementing similar facilities in Ethiopia and Aden, Moscow now deploys up to 10 or 11 ships out of Cam Ranh Bay, including one attack cruise-missile submarine, three surface combatants and an intelligence gatherer.**

**In a number of cases, Vietnam, Kampuchea, Aden and Ethiopia, these military arrangements are backed up by wide-ranging friendship treaties providing for military co-operation, "For the first time our dominance in the area is being challenged" said a US intelligence official. Vietnamese officials recently hinted that, failing a satisfactory outcome to negotiations with its non-Communist neighbours over the status of Kampuchea, Hanoi may be forced to give the Soviet Union, which has an effective strangle-hold over the Vietnamese economy, full base facilities. "That would be a big blow", admitted one British intelligence officer.**

IN THE PHILIPPINES *the deteriorating health of President Ferdinand Marcos and the threat of instability after he leaves the scene must raise doubts in Washington about the permanence of this crucial naval arrangement.*

*In Australia, would the Labour Party, if elected, close Australian ports and harbours to US nuclear-armed ships? There are doubts over the solidity of the* ANZUS *defence pact, which groups the US, New Zealand and Australia, at a time when American forces are under greater pressure to cover the approaches to the Gulf and the oilfields of the Middle East and are looking for relief in the Pacific.*

*The Reagan administration's analysts argue that the Russians have four main aims:*

**Neutralising Japan in any conflict.**

**Placing themselves in a position to cut off Western oil supplies from the Gulf.**

**Intimidating ASEAN through the projection of Soviet power, thus influencing political events, such as talks over Kampuchea.**

**Attempting to limit, and if possible prevent, the strengthening of strategic links between the West and China.**

WHY *the Russians are building their forces in Asia can only be a matter of speculation. What is no longer in doubt is that they are now a power to be reckoned with in the area and every conceivable Western response to this new challenge can only be limited and unsatisfactory.*

*Alain Cass*
*Asian Editor,*
in the FINANCIAL TIMES

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option holds no terrors; but there should be no doubt that if the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation disintegrates into a collection of "neutralist" nation-states, denuded of credible deterrence or effective defence (and this is the logical conclusion of the policies advocated by the "peace" movements), their survival as free and independent societies will depend upon the whim of the Soviet Union. It is a course which has little attraction for those who are disposed to take the words and actions of the Russian leadership at their face value.

There is, in fact, *no* real choice for Western Europe. The inescapable necessity is to bend the efforts of foreign policy to repairing the cracks which are appearing in the Western alliance; to recognise that there are long-term strategic concerns which override short- and medium-term conflicts of economic interests, for the simple reason that they are not matters only of stability and prosperity but of survival.

IT IS ESSENTIAL as a first step to reassert a collective commitment to the objectives of the Alliance, and to avoid becoming enmeshed in debilitating arguments about the short-term means by which they are to be achieved. The principal aim must continue to be to preserve the security of the West through effectively deterring the potential enemy from exercising his military option.

It is arguable that this should now be done with less dependence on nuclear weapons and more on strong conventional forces. It does not, however, mean giving hostages to fortune in the form of "nuclear-free zones" and "no first use" declarations. Within the context of effective deterrence it should be possible to reduce dangerous tensions by means of a continuing dialogue between East and West, and specifically by the negotiation of verifiable arms control agreements. Within the framework of a revived consensus on these basic objectives, one of the cardinal aims of all Western European foreign policy must be to ensure that the United States remains fully engaged in the security of the free world.

An essential prerequisite is to counter the insidious anti-Americanism which is, to the delight of our enemies, beginning to poison the mainstream of the Western alliance. This is not to suggest that uncritical adulation of everything American is in order; merely that everything American is not by definition simple-minded or ill-intentioned. Nor is it meant to suggest a slavish dependence on the United States—we do not, as an efficiently indoctrinated young delegate remarked recently at a political party conference, want to become "another Hawaii." If it were, however, the only alternative (and it is not) it might be preferable to becoming another Hungary.

## Drive us back to Zahlé

Please measure my neck.
I want it for a suit.
O.K. wrap it please.

You must have time for fun.
I will show you an excellent kind.
Drive us back to Zahlé.

But the sea is rough.
Do you want me to cut it short for you?
Do you want it in the first or second floor?

Please, send me the chambermaid.
Anything forbidden?
Anything contrabanded?

*B. C. Leale*

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*Arthur Schlesinger, Jr*

# Can The System Be Saved?

## *The Short Happy Life of American Political Parties*

*"As the high Soviet official said to the visiting US Senator, 'We have so much trouble with one single party—how do you ever manage with two?'..."*

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN recently in the United States about the travail of the party system. Indeed the trouble is real enough. A century ago, in the presidential election of 1880, 79.4% of Americans eligible to vote cast their ballots. In 1980 only 52.3% did. Each figure bespoke its time. In no presidential election between the Civil War and the turn of the century did voter turnout fall below 70%. In every presidential election since 1960, turnout has been lower than in the one before.

What has happened over a hundred years to the American as political animal? It can hardly be said that those dutiful voters of a century ago flocked to the polls because of the glamour of their leaders. The 1880 choice—James A. Garfield v. Winfield Scott Hancock—was no more inspiring than the choice the republic endured in 1980. The dreary candidacies of those post-Civil War years moved Lord Bryce to write his famous chapter on "Why Great Men Are Not Chosen President."

Of course there have been significant changes since 1880 in the composition of the American electorate. Over the last 70 years the 19th Amendment (women's suffrage), the Voting Rights Act (blacks), and the 26th Amendment (18-year-old vote) have successively enlarged the pool of eligible voters. But the newly-enfranchised tend, for an interval at least, to vote less than adult white males long accustomed to the process. Each enlargement has consequently reduced the ratio of turnout. The lowest 20th-century figures—49.2 and 48.9%—came in 1920 and 1924 after the vote went to women.

Still, the voting pool was steadily enlarged in the 19th century by an influx of immigrants even less accustomed to the process than native-born women, blacks, or 18-year-olds. Yet white male immigrants were rather promptly incorporated into the political system. The agency that seized and indoctrinated them was the political party. In the 20th century the Party has proved notably less successful in mobilising women, blacks, and the young. The conspicuous difference between 1880 and 1980 lies in the decay of the Party as the organising unit of American politics.

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PARTIES HAVE ALWAYS represented the great anomaly of the American political system. Deplored and even feared by the Founding Fathers, unknown to the Constitution, they imperiously forced themselves into political life in the early years of the republic. Their extra-constitutional presence acquired in surprisingly short order a quasi-constitutional legitimacy. By the time the first President born-an-American-citizen took his oath of office, parties had become, it seemed, the indispensable means of American self-government. (It was fitting that this President, Martin Van Buren, was himself both the creative practitioner and the classic philosopher of the role of Party in the American democracy.)

This extra-constitutional revolution took place because parties met urgent social and political needs. In the dialect of the sociologists, parties were functional. Their existence contributed in a variety of ingenious ways to the maintenance and stability of the system.

Thus the Thirteen Colonies that joined precariously together to form the American Union were separated by local loyalties, by diverging folkways, by imperfect communications; yet they were



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pledged to establish a Nation. The parties, as national associations, were a force, soon a potent force, against provincialism. "The party system of Government", Franklin D. Roosevelt once said, "is one of the greatest methods of unification and of teaching people to think in common terms of our civilisation. . . ." When by the middle of the 19th century sectional tension betweeen North and South had split most national institutions (even the churches), party organisation was the last bond of union to give way.

Moreover, parties performed a vital function in the national government itself; for they supplied a means, it soon turned out, of overcoming one of the paradoxes of the Constitution. The Founders' doctrine of the "separation of power", literally construed, threatened to defeat the ideal of concerted action which is the essence of effective government. The need to make the new government work demanded a mechanism that would coordinate the executive and legislative branches. The Party now furnished the connective tissue essential to unity of administration.

THE PARTIES found other functions in a polity groping to give substance to the idea of democracy. As vehicles for ideas, they furthered the nation's political education, both defining a framework of national consensus and debating national issues within that framework. As instruments of compromise, they encouraged, within the parties as well as between them, the containment and mediation of national quarrels. As agencies of representation, they gave salient interests a voice in national decisions and thus a stake in the national political order. As agencies of recruitment, they brought men into national service and leadership. As agencies of mobilisation, they drew ordinary people into the political community. As agencies of social escalation, they opened paths of upward mobility to ambitious men debarred by class or ethnic prejudice from more conventional avenues to status. And parties were, as noted, a primary agency of "Americanisation", receiving, digesting and assimilating immigrants from abroad, initiating them into the rites of politics, tending, as was said, "to fuse them into one mass of citizenship, pervaded by a common order of ideas and sentiments, and actuated by the same class of motives. . . ."

On the local level, the political organisation, while organised for purposes of self-advancement and self-enrichment, prevailed because it also met social needs. Without mistaking the Party Boss for a sort of early social worker, one may still agree that city machines gave many people lost in an impersonal and demoralising economic world a rare feeling of human contact. The patronage jobs, the food baskets, the Thanksgiving turkey, the ever available precinct captain, the sense (as Martin Lomasney told Lincoln Steffens) "that there's got to be in every ward somebody that any bloke can come to—no matter what he's done—and get help"—all this led, in Herbert Croly's phrase, to "a much more human system of partisan government."

In an age lacking developed forms of mass entertainment, parties even became an essential source of diversion and fun.

> "To take a hand in the regulation of society and to discuss it [Tocqueville noted] is his biggest concern and, so to speak, the only pleasure an American knows. This feeling pervades the most trifling habits of life; even the women frequently attend public meetings and listen to political harangues as a recreation from their household labors. Debating clubs are, to a certain extent, a substitute for theatrical entertainments."

IN VIEW OF the manifold functions served, it is no surprise that American parties rather quickly planted their roots deep into the political culture. The immediate post-Civil War years were, I suppose, the golden age of political parties. Party regularity was higher, party loyalty deeper and party stability greater than at any other time in American history. People inherited their politics as they did their religion, and no more thought of abandoning their party than of abandoning their church. Independent voting was scorned, even when, as in 1884, it was urged by the most high-minded spokesmen of the genteel tradition. "A good party", Thomas B. Reed said, "is better than the best man that ever lived." Or, in the sonorous language of Senator Ratcliffe in Henry Adams's *Democracy* (1880),

> "Believing as I do that great results can only be accomplished by great parties, I have uniformly yielded my own personal opinions where they have failed to obtain general assent."

How remote this all sounds! The contrast between 1882, say, and 1982 could hardly be more spectacular. A century after the golden age, all the gauges that measure Party efficacy register trouble. By every test Party loyalty in the old style is nearing extinction. "Ticket-splitting" has become epidemic. On billboards and bumper stickers candidates minimise when they do not conceal their party affiliations. The party of those voters who designate themselves "independents" has for some years beaten the Republican Party in public opinion polls. The proportion of independents is particularly high among the young, whose

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habits predict the electorate of the future. The classical political machine has generally disappeared, even in Chicago. Recent presidential elections have been marked not only by the decline in turnout but by the rise of personalist political movements—George Wallace in 1968, Eugene McCarthy in 1976, John Anderson in 1980. All these developments are symptoms of a party order in a state of dissolution. The most astute of our analysts, Samuel Lubell, has written of "a war of the voters against the party system." What in the world has happened?

LIVING AS WE DO amidst the ruins of the traditional party system, we see a great nostalgia arising for the "good old days" of Party supremacy. This nostalgia may well conceal some of the reasons for Party decline. For political scientists bent on the revitalisation of the Party system have an unduly romantic conception of the golden age; or so, at least, the historian is tempted to think. It was no doubt a golden age for the Party as an institution. It was hardly a golden age for Presidents or for public policy. As the testimony of Reed and Ratcliffe suggests, the Party, originating as a means to other ends, had become after a while the end in itself. Like all institutions, the interest in organisational survival superseded the functions that had initially called the Party into being. The religion of Party, however ennobling it may appear in sentimental retrospect, was not universally revered even in its days of glory.

For the zenith of party supremacy in the United States coincided with the nadir of politics as a profession. As party became king, the quality of men entering politics declined. Not a single notable President led the nation in the 40 years between Abraham Lincoln and the first Roosevelt; and Lincoln was a minority President and Roosevelt an accident. Lesser politicians were generally mediocrities when they were not thieves.

"I am not a politician", said Artemus Ward, "and my other habits are good."

"Reader, suppose you were an idiot", wrote Mark Twain. "And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself. . . ."

We are admonished these days to recall the blessings of Boss rule. Contemplating the invasion of political parties by meddlesome amateurs and zealots streaming up through primaries and caucuses, some insist how much better it was in the good old time when a few bosses could retire to the smoke-filled room and come out with a strong candidate and a "balanced ticket." Yet bosses rarely propose candidates they cannot control. The great Presidents of the 20th century all won nomination over the prostrate bodies of Party Bosses. The typical candidate to emerge from a smoke-filled room is, of course, Warren G. Harding. New ideas have gained access to politics precisely through hard-to-control reformers like Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, John Kennedy and, in his peculiar way, Ronald Reagan—all leaders who had to take their parties away from the bosses and remould them in their own images. Bosses are responsive to local interest and local boodle; reformers to national concerns and national aspirations. Let us not succumb to sentimental myths.

Moreover, as Party loyalty, regularity and discipline increased, so did the capacity of parties to evade pressing issues. In the last half of the 19th century the major parties did badly in expressing popular urgencies. The result was increasing resort to Third Parties and to non-party movements pressing issues the major parties ignored—issues the major parties grudgingly coopted only when necessary to assure their own survival.

The 19th-century cult of Party, in fact, stifled the art of politics. Walt Whitman, the old Jacksonian, retained the ante-bellum faith in politics as the method of democracy. He condemned "the fashion among dillettants and fops . . . to decry the whole formulation of the active politics of America as beyond redemption, and to be carefully kept away from." He urged young men "to enter more strongly yet into politics. . . . Always inform yourself; always do the best you can; always vote." Then he added with emphasis,

> "Disengage yourself from parties. They have been useful, and to some extent remain so. . . . But these savage, wolfish parties alarm me. Owning no law but their own will . . . it behooves you to convey yourself implicitly to no party, nor submit blindly to their dictators, but steadily hold yourself judge and master over all of them."

Party supremacy, in short, bred political frustration. Whitman looked for the redemption of politics to

> "the floating, uncommitted electors, farmers, clerks, mechanics, the masters of parties—watching aloof, inclining victory this side or that side—such are the ones most needed, present and future."

Such sentiments prophesied the steady drift of voters from parties that has characterised the evolution of American politics over the last century.

ONE MUST AGAIN ASK: what happened? The parties, when they set themselves up as ends in themselves, became to a degree their own gravediggers. But they were also the victims of changes

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in the political environment. For the modern history of political parties has been the story of the steady loss of the functions that gave parties their classical role.

The rise of the mass media reduced the centrality of parties as the means of national unification. The rise of a civil service based on merit largely dried up the resources of patronage. The decline (until rather recently) of mass immigration deprived the city machine of its historic clientele. The professionalisation of social work and the growth of the welfare state reduced the role of parties in ministering to the poor and helpless. A more diversified society opened better avenues of upward social mobility. The development of the modern mass entertainment industry gave people more agreeable diversions than listening to political harangues. And parties in recent times have conspicuously neglected their obligation to recognise urgent popular concerns. Many of the well-known movements of our own age have developed outside the party process. Civil rights, women's liberation, the ecological movement, and most recently the anti-nuclear movement—all surged up from the grass roots to impose themselves on our politics.

The decline of parties has been under way a long time. The "Progressive period" at the start of the 20th century saw an active assault on entrenched party organisation through devices of direct democracy. This particular assault languished rather quickly. But the erosion of parties continued. The 20th century had no shrewder politician than the second Roosevelt. FDR had no 19th-century illusions about the sanctity of party. A Democrat, he cast his first presidential vote for a Republican, appointed two Republicans to his cabinet when elected President himself (and two more in the shadow of war), and a few months before his death was exploring the possibility of a political alliance with the very man the Republicans had run against him four years earlier. "People tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than most of my predecessors in the Presidency", he told a Democratic Party dinner in 1940. "... I must admit the soft impeachment." Parties, FDR added,

> "are good instruments for the purpose of presenting and explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections, and, incidentally, of improving the breed of candidates for public office.
>
> But the future lies with those wise political leaders who realise that the great public is interested more in Government than in politics.... The growing independence of voters, after all, has been proven by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood—and the tendency, frankly, is on the increase."

The tendency that FDR discerned greatly intensified in the next 40 years and has landed the parties in the condition of desuetude we gloomily acknowledge today.

IT WAS THIS SITUATION that produced the zeal of a dozen years ago for Party reform. That reform movement has been much misunderstood. It is currently fashionable to ascribe the contemporary Party crisis to changes in Party rules. But the reform movement of the 1960s, unlike the Progressive movement at the turn of the century, represented a serious effort to hold the Party together and thereby to save the Party system. The theory of the reforms was to tame the new social energies and incorporate them into the Party process. In particular, it was to do for women, non-whites, and the young what 19th-century parties had done for immigrants. Nor can one reasonably argue that the enlargement of citizen participation is such a bad thing in a democracy.

Some of the reforms—the modernisation of procedures, for example, the new strength and autonomy conferred on the national committee, and the larger representation of women and of minorities—probably gave parties a somewhat longer life-expectancy. Other rule changes carelessly or deliberately ignored the interests of parties as institutions; but most of these mistakes have already been corrected. In any event, the idea that rule changes caused the party crisis, and that repealing those changes will cure it, is akin to the delusion of Rostand's Chantecler that his cock-a-doodle made the sun rise. Political scientists should never forget Bryce's sage reminder: "The student of institutions, as well as the lawyer, is apt to overrate the effect of mechanical contrivances in politics." Party reform was not a cause of but a response to deeper maladies.

PARTIES ARE IN TROUBLE, in short, because they failed to meet national needs in their season of supremacy and because they have lost one after another of their historic functions. And today a fundamental transformation in the political environment is further undermining the already shaky structure of American politics. Two modern electronic devices—television and the computer—are having a devastating and conceivably fatal impact on the Party system.

The old Party system had three tiers: the Politician at one end, the Voter at the other, and the Party in between. The Party negotiated between the politician and the voter, interpreting each to the other and providing the links that held the political system together. The electronic revolu-

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tion has substantially abolished the mediatorial function.

Information about political choices now flows from other and stronger sources. Television presents the politician directly to the voter, who judges candidates more on what the tiny screen shows him than on what party leaders tell him. Computerised public-opinion polls present the voter directly to the politician, who judges the electorate more on what the polls show him than on what Party leaders tell him. The political organisation in consequence is left to wither on the vine. The prime Party function that A. Lawrence Lowell classically described as "brokerage" has become largely obsolescent.

The Party has lost its domination of the lines of information and communication between the political world and mass opinion. It has lost most of its power to select top candidates too. This loss is often blamed on the state-wide proliferation of presidential primaries—again the fallacy of ascribing to structure what is really the result of deeper tendencies. Presidential primaries have been around for a long time. It took television to transform them into the controlling force they are today. Television has given the ordinary citizen a new sense of entitlement in the political process. The drama of the "dark horse" magically conjured out of the smoke-filled room has gone, never to return. Presidential nominating conventions, once forums of decision, have become in the electronic age ceremonies of ratification. A person born in the last year that a convention required more than one ballot to choose the presidential candidate would be 30 years old today.

The Party, in addition, is losing its control over campaigns. Television and polling have created a new breed of electronic professionals. Assembled in election-management firms, these media specialists, often working indifferently for one party or the other, usurp the role once played by the party organisation. The most successful specialists—David Garth, for example—insist on total command of campaigns as a condition of their services.

CAN THE PARTY SYSTEM be saved? I must confess scepticism about many of the popular remedies. Proposals to centralise and discipline the parties run against the grain of American politics as well as against the centrifugal impact of the electronic age. Obviously we must do what we can to avoid weakening the Party system further. Such schemes as the direct election of Presidents, a national primary, a national initiative and referendum, might well administer the *coup de grâce* and must be resisted. The provision of free television time to the national Party committees would be modestly useful in propping the parties up. But most structural remedies will have limited effect. The attempt to shore up structure in face of loss of function is artificial and futile.

The Party is simply no longer indispensable as an agency of mass mobilisation; or as an agency of presidential selection; or as an agency of information and communication; or as an agency of brokerage; or as an agency of welfare and acculturation; or even as a manager of campaigns. If present tendencies continue, parties will soon have little more to do than collect money, certify platforms and provide labels for the organisation of elections and legislatures. The question that engages historians and political scientists today—and ought to engage practical men more than it does—is whether this decay of the Party system is irreversible.

The pessimists think it is. Analysts as different in their personal politics as Walter Dean Burnham and Kevin Phillips argue that the contradictions between capitalism and democracy have reached the point where the liberal tradition has run out of steam and has nothing more to contribute. The welfare state, it is observed, has failed; the free-market alternative is far down the road to failure; and the cumulative result of frustration on the part of citizens and impotence on the part of government will lead to a dismissal of traditional Party politics and a crisis in the foundations of the constitutional régime.

Others, more optimistic, see the present disintegration of the party as a predictable phase in the confused interlude that precedes realignment and revival—a phase in the deconstruction and reconstruction of party systems that American politics has experienced before and will experience again. I have a certain sympathy with this view; for history reminds us of a cyclical rhythm in American politics, a perennial alternation between conservatism and innovation, between the market and the state. As a nation, America goes through seasons of action, passion, idealism, reform and affirmative government, until the country is exhausted. Thereupon Americans demand respite and enter into seasons of privatisation, drift, cynicism, hedonism and negative government. For the moment, the republic is in the conservative phase of the cycle. If history is a guide, it will not be in that phase for ever.

One may almost speak, I think, of the inevitability of a return to affirmative government in the years ahead. This will come as a technical imperative, a functional necessity; for our major problems are problems that the market is structurally incapable of solving. Big government no doubt might take a reactionary as well as a liberal form; but the historical dialectic suggests that liberal interventionism will receive one more chance before Mr Kevin Phillips's regressive populist

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authoritarianism takes over.

Attractive as this more optimistic view is, it still does not address itself directly to the startling changes in the political culture wrought by the electronic revolution.

The question remains: what functions are left to parties in the electronic age?

THERE ARE AT LEAST TWO ways, it seems to me, by which these decrepit organisations may acquire a new lease on life. What counts in a democracy at the end is, after all, not money nor publicity nor incumbency, but whether or not policies work. A major source of the anxiety and frustration that darken the climate of our politics today is surely the gnawing fear that all our masters are intellectually baffled by and analytically impotent before the long-term crises of our age—that they know neither the causes nor the cures and are desperately improvising on the edge of catastrophe.

The first need therefore is to revive parties as incubators of remedies. One wishes that the intellectual energy expended in recent years on saving the party by procedural reform had been devoted instead to the substance of our problems. Nor, may I add, are substantive problems going to be solved by large committees with two representatives from every state, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. Ideas are produced by individuals working in solitude. They are refined and extended by informal discussions with other individuals. They are disseminated when political leaders, conscious both of the world's problems and their own ignorance, reach out for counsel. The incubation of remedy depends, not on techniques of party organisation, but on the intelligence and resourcefulness of people outside the organisation and on the receptivity and seriousness of individual politicians, who will then use the parties as vehicles for ideas.

The second hope for Party restoration follows in sequence. It lies in the election of competent Presidents who will thereafter act to revitalise their party in the interest of their own more effective command of the political process. The future of the Party may well be as an instrument of Presidents who, in order to put new programmes into effect, invoke the party to overcome the separation of powers in Washington and to organise mass support in the country. The first year of President Reagan shows that this can happen, even in the electronic age. If his remedies had worked, he would not be in trouble today—and when remedies don't work, no amount of organisational legerdemain can redeem a Presidency.

I believe that we must make a stern effort to find a role for political Parties in the days ahead. We must make the effort because the alternative will be a slow, agonised, turbulent descent into an era of what Walter Dean Burnham has called "politics without parties." Of course this is the way America began. But even in those simple 18th-century days the Constitution, as we have seen, required parties for effective operation. One shudders at the consequences for the American polity of "politics without parties" in the high-technology age.

The crumbling away of the historic parties would leave political power in America concentrated in the leaders of personalist movements, in the interest groups that finance them, and in the executive bureaucracy, which will increasingly supply the major element of stability in an ever more unstable environment. The rest of the voters might not even have the limited entry into and leverage on the process that the Party system, for all its manifold defects, has made possible. Without the stabilising influence of parties, our politics would grow angrier, wilder, and more irresponsible.

We cannot reclaim the past by act of will. As Henry Adams observed:

> "The sum of political life, was, or should have been, the attainment of a working political system. Society needed to reach it. If moral standards broke down, and machinery stopped working, new morals and machinery of some sort had to be invented."

This is surely the problem for American statecraft today—to come up with the morals, machinery, and ideas demanded by the harsh tasks of the remaining years of the 20th century. We will never attain a working political system by concentrating on the revision of party rules and structure. We will attain it only by remembering that politics is the art of solving problems.

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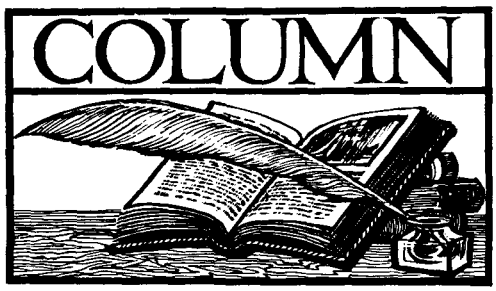


KEEP your kitsch: there may be money in it. For years, my parents relegated to an attic what they condescendingly called "the art pot" —a florid Victorian object with scenes from *Othello* round the sides. At one time, it had been used to conceal a plebeian earthenware flower-pot containing, as I recall, a "Cape gooseberry" or "Chinese lantern" plant, known to botanists as *Physalis*. But taste had eventually prevailed, and the poor old art pot was banished. Soon it disappeared altogether, broken in some clearing-out operation. When I saw it again—or rather, saw its brother—it was in an antique shop, marked at a staggering price.

The art pot came to mind a few weeks ago, when I went to the Grand Palais in Paris to have a look at the *Salon d'automne*. It was advertised as featuring Rouault, one of whose sad clown/Christ faces adorned the catalogue. In the exhibition, six bays were devoted to his paintings and etchings, including two very early works which looked like smoky Old Masters. It was good to see the more familiar pictures, hot with colour, and to inspect Rouault's chunky brushes and impasto-laden palette, on view in a glass case. But with so few canvases, this was hardly the retrospective that I'd been led to expect; and the rest of the show was amazing.

It seems only a few years since a typical Paris *Salon d'automne* would have been filled with junk sculpture, abstract expressionism, op art, pop art, or some other glimpse of the then avant-garde: a light show, perhaps, some bricks and sacking, a few manhole covers or garbage lovingly reproduced, some black or white canvases with holes cut in them, an entirely dark room, or a row of sealed tins allegedly containing the artist's excrement. All these, at one time or another, have graced galleries here or there.

This time it was different. Beyond the Rouault section stretched bay after bay of the kind of paintings we're used to seeing displayed on the railings of Kensington Gardens, on the streets of Montmartre, or along the waterfront in Venice—slick, naturalistic, melodramatically lit, buzzing with unlikely artificial colour, full of the false glamour of fashion sketches or flashy photography. Do not adjust your set: these orchidaceous art-objects weren't the result of monkeying with the colour control or taking an overdose of Dali, Annigoni, or Bernard Buffet: they were what young painters and their patrons actually wanted to produce in reaction against the immediate past.

So keep your kitsch. Hurry to your nearest department store selling green-cheeked pin-up girls, tomato-omelette views of Notre-Dame or San Marco, and chocolate-box landscapes with cottages, stage-coaches, and cotton-wool snow. Hang on to this year's Christmas cards. You may make a killing with them in the Lanes of Brighton or on San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf.

SO TASTES change; but what takes longer to change is the rationale proposed for any particular fashion. The language of criticism sticks in our heads, and only the adroitest of acrobats can adapt quickly enough to fall on his feet. The rest of us gaze bemused at the latest artefact, tacitly asking it questions which it wasn't designed to answer. Rationally, we know we're missing the point; viscerally, we still hanker for the expected response. In aesthetic matters, most of us suffer from jet-set lag.

This is nowhere more evident than in the cinema. *Sight and Sound*, the British Film Institute's glossy quarterly, recently published the fourth of its decennial surveys of what assorted critics judge to be the "top ten" films of all time. In 1952, Vittorio De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves* headed the list, followed by two Chaplin films. By 1962, De Sica had dropped to seventh place, and Chaplin was nowhere. By 1972, De Sica was out, and Buster Keaton, Federico Fellini, and Ingmar Bergman had crept in. By 1982, Bergman was out again, and Keaton had dropped to last but one of the ten. But what was really remarkable was that in the last three surveys, Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* had topped the poll. In 1952 it had been unplaced. In 1982 it won by several lengths.

The top film of all time? That's surely hard to substantiate. *Kane* is an arresting movie, with its newsreel and *March of Time* parodies, its disdain for chronological narrative, and its use, thanks to Gregg Toland, of wide-angle and deep-focus photography. Its visual style, in fact, resembles that of the comic strip. Is this why it's now so popular? Dazzling as it looks, it lacks mature content. The nub of the story, you remember, is that Kane, the megalomaniac newspaper tycoon, is emotionally crippled because of an early fixation: "Rosebud", his famous last word, turns out to be the name of his boyhood toboggan. Wow! It'll just about do as the nub of an anecdote or a magazine profile; but so thin a conceit can hardly sustain a would-be serious film. Unless, of course, we're



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prepared to accept that movies, by their very nature, will always be inferior to novels. And that, I think, is to make far too modest a claim for the art of the film.

*Kane*'s critical prestige, however, is echoed by that of another newcomer to the 1982 list: Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. That, too, is an entertaining movie; but can anyone honestly believe that it ranks in any "top ten"? A "top ten" of literature would presumably include *Crime and Punishment, Wuthering Heights, War and Peace, Moby Dick*, and other works of such ambition and stature. *Que diable va faire Hitchcock dans cette galère?* A skilful maker of mysteries, playing on everyone's sinister fears—at best the equivalent of Sheridan Le Fanu, Edgar Allan Poe, or Ira Levin.

No less anomalous are some of the other film favourites. Orson Welles again, with *The Magnificent Ambersons*—a picture given a fake happy ending by its producers, and anyway based on a novel by Booth Tarkington, creator of the scapegrace Penrod, but not exactly Dostoevsky. Then there's Fellini's $8\frac{1}{2}$, a sadly pretentious and narcissistic movie about how hard a middle-aged director finds it to make a good film. *Singin' in the Rain*, by Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly: a joyous romp, perhaps in the *Tristram Shandy* or Thackeray class, but hardly part of some Leavisite great tradition. Even films perennially honoured show their flaws on repeated viewings. When I first saw Jean Renoir's *La Règle du Jeu*, I was bowled over—notably by the breathtaking scenes of wildlife fleeing from the hunters; but on analysis the story dissolves into a simplistic comparison of upstairs and below-stairs conventions, closing like paper screens over indecorous emotion and violence. Is that really enough to sustain a work of art? And the same question could be asked of that supreme shibboleth, Sergei Eisenstein's *The Battleship Potemkin*. We all know how brilliant and revolutionary, in every sense, the Odessa Steps sequence was, pitilessly repeating the massacre, hammering home its message with piledriver force. But how about the message? Mind-bogglingly simple: tyranny is cruel. Not a work about individual scruples, or the faintest hint that tyrannicides and revolutionaries can be cruel in their turn. If *Potemkin*'s a masterpiece, so is Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the* [Nazi] *Will*.

WHY IS THERE such disparity between our demands on literature and what we accept from film? One answer might be that movies aren't novels: that they share elements with books, plays, music, radio, photography, and painting, but add a special witchcraft of their own. Perhaps it's their witchcraft that the critics are applauding—isolating "cinematic quality" as playgoers isolate "good theatre" or chemists identify the active ingredient in some therapeutic gunge. Up to a point, I can go along with them. I, too, admire the tricksiness of *Kane* or Hitchcock, the swirling ball scene in *Ambersons*, the dreamlike, hypnotic spells cast by Antonioni or Fellini. I'm a sucker for suspense, amazement, jump-cutting, bizarre camera-angles, and 360-degree pans. In the same way, I enjoy books that are finely printed and exquisitely bound. But in the end it's the content that matters: the depth of understanding, the expansion of sympathies, the exploration of the human condition, the affirmation and embodiment of tested, grown-up values. By those criteria, how many movies make the grade?

The sponsors of "top ten" listings usually concede, as if with a lop-sided smile, that the exercise is "only a game." Perhaps it is, but for games to be fun, they have to be played for all they're worth. Here, then, are my tentative suggestions for arriving at the "top ten" films.

I put it that way because preliminaries are involved. We're talking about films, not directors; and the rules of the game limit the number to ten. This has unfortunate effects. It's hard on some fine directors whose corpus of work is impressive, but whose individual films are edged out. John Ford chronicled the West incomparably; but *The Searchers*, tenth on *Sight and Sound*'s 1982 list, doesn't make mine. Alain Resnais, Fred Zinnemann, Robert Flaherty, Jean Cocteau, Luis Buñuel, Robert Bresson—all, surely, deserve to figure in the pantheon; but with only ten films to choose, they can't. Still more amazingly, I find myself having to leave out at least five film-makers whom I couldn't regard more highly. Given a few more films, I'd have included Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* and Fellini's *Nights of Cabiria*—the former for its iconography, illustrating Lord Acton's dictum on power, and the latter for its bubbling courage against all the odds. And what a sacrifice it is to spurn the now unfashionable De Sica—not on account of *Bicycle Thieves*, but because it means losing *Sciuscia*, a far more natural and heartfelt film. Last of all, and first of all, how can I bear to omit the cinema's two greatest humanists, Jean Renoir and Satyajit Ray? Only because both *La Bête Humaine*, my favourite Renoir film, and the great Apu trilogy seem to me weaker than some of the others on the list.

With almost as much regret, I've left out comedy. This means losing not only *Singin' in the Rain*, but all of Keaton, all of the Marx Brothers, and the late Jacques Tati's *Les Vacances de M. Hulot*—surely the most loving, wistful, and sunny of all lonely films. Then, too, there are minor films with major virtues, from the sensitive evocation of desolate post-war Germany in Anatole Litvak's *Decision Before Dawn* to the scarcely less desolate atmosphere of Belfast in Carol Reed's *Odd Man*

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*Out*. All through the vaults there are cans of film that could be savoured like rare if modest wines from an eclectic cellar: but the rules forbid illicit tasting. We have to stick to our ten. As in a Miss World contest, let's begin with the runners-up.

TENTH ON MY LIST of winners is Ermanno Olmi's *Il Posto*, the cinema's truest portrait of the world of work impinging on a newcomer. As shy as the young recruit, the film shares his wonderment and worry as shades of the prison-house close in: it's a small, real, human predicament honestly observed.

Cognate in feeling, but more complex and ambitious, is François Truffaut's first full-length feature, *Les Quatre Cents Coups*. Later, its sequels (and Jean-Pierre Léaud's performances as the ex-juvenile delinquent) began to seem mannered and tiresome; but this film still looks sparklingly wayward, and its victim-hero is as maddening and likeable as ever.

Eighth on my list is another wayward movie—Orson Welles's deeply flawed *Othello*. Harassed by lack of money, it was a hazardous production: one scene was set in a bath-house because the costumes hadn't arrived. But for all its faults, including a far too spiteful Iago, it was for years the best Shakespeare film I'd seen.

It was soon surpassed by No 7: Grigori Kozintsev's stunning *Hamlet*, complete with Shostakovich's music, and informed by deep understanding and scholarship to match its beguiling visuals. Of the dozen or so film versions of the play, including Olivier's, this is to my mind the best.

Another Russian adaptation takes sixth place: Sergei Bondarchuk's eight-hour version of *War and Peace*. At that length, it could have been an unwieldy mammoth. In fact, it was not only spectactular, but sensitive, a masterly instance of empathy energetically controlled.

No 5 on my list has a similar monumentality: Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*. There's a limit to my patience with Nordic soul-searching, and later Bergman films have a squashy self-absorption that turns me off. But here, with a few reservations, is the screen's most convincing portrait of the middle ages in Europe, and one which virtually persuades me that the Devil exists. Not bad for a 90-minute movie.

Hardly less harrowing is my choice for fourth place: Andrzej Wajda's Resistance trilogy—notable, again, for carrying utter conviction. Instead of propaganda or false heroics, here are films which portray real people in real, complex situations; they don't sacrifice meaning to photography, or life to an over-neat conception of art.

Third, with a few misgivings, comes Akira Kurosawa's *The Seven Samurai*—a real eyeful of exotica, a splendid story, and a heart-warming hero. Why then any misgivings? Perhaps because I don't quite trust Kurosawa as I trust Satyajit Ray: it's simply that *Samurai* hangs together so much better than the rather clumsy Apu trilogy that it wins its place as a film.

Second on the list is the only silent film, Carl Dreyer's *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*. Dreyer took immense pains to be accurate: but it's not as a portrait of its age that this film grips me. Its power lies in the timeless terror of interrogation and persecution, personified by Falconetti's small, shorn, vulnerable head.

So, finally, to No 1 in my private *cinemathèque imaginaire*: the immense, tender, yearning expanse of Mark Donskoi's Gorky trilogy—*The Childhood of Maxim Gorky, My Apprenticeship*, and *My Universities*. As a plea for Russia, this is fifty times more potent than *Potemkin*; as the presentation of a country, a people, and a growing person, it still seems to me unsurpassed.

By now, you know my preferences. Keep your kitsch. There may be money in it. But the real gold is truth.

## Reaching For Noddy

*On a Theme by Gavin Ewart*

Cinderella lost her slipper,
Cinders' sisters lost their eyes;
The unpopular are punished
In a very nasty wise.

Many suitors lost their heads, for
Only one could strike it rich.
Fairytales—like life—are horrid.
Better settle for some *kitsch*.

*Gerda Mayer*

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*Peter Redgrove*

# Waterworks as Broadcasting House

I

The crystal tubes of the house-set,
In the black crystals of the waterpipes
The actors of water.

The great water-temple, the transmitter,
That holds the lee wave of water off the mountains
In cistern and reservoir, pumps the ladders of water,

The pipes hold the source's note
Of the high clouds, the spring's trill, the lake's Om
All swing under the moon

Music humming in the closed cisterns;
The water assistant listens
To the choiring of his great shackled charge.

The little clear staircases of water running,
The open fire of the flickering sump
Under sunshine, ashless fire.

II

Take away the brick and the cast iron and you have
The true crystal palace of pillars
Full of water passing, swirling glasses

And troubled dials, and water-horses
Drumming in the cellarage, recordings
Held in folded water of frayed beaches

And jagged storms, put your ear to this pipe,
The snarl of stratospheric winds, the milliard note
Of rain; put back the iron,

The spiral staircases, the galleries take up the tune,
The drops of notes, the tuned water
Combine to a chord of an iron organ,

Shaped in water-board music
That lengthens across the land
Played by the refreshing keyboard of faucets;

So the water stands in the works for a while
Or organises its music before it comes
Leaping in harmonies from your tap;

Jangling unrested water sickens;
Water full of the world's tunes comes with full health.

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*Geoffrey Grigson*

# Boats

Poems and boats have this in common:
They had better float.
Engines they do not entirely need,
Dismountable, transferable, outboard.

Oars will do, or anchors
After all, anchoring so that
Poems and boats instead of still,
Pulse lightly to a pulse

Of passing water, lapping,
Lively. If they float it's
All the same whether or no poem
Or boat is given a name.

Few boats are gilded barges of occasion.
Some are gondolas, a little fake
Also. Some, Old Rusty Rails, are vulgar
Ferries; more, white dip-dapping.

Yachts directed by off-duty
Dentists. Most are prams,
Which nip like limericks. And as well
There are folded-neatly paper boats.

These quickly suck up water
When they are set afloat.
Better—for poets—not to be
Captain, or cargo, of a paper boat.

*Raymond Tong*

# Leaving a Room

Bishop Berkeley, I am free of you at last.
Now when I leave a room I no longer
wonder if that room has suddenly ceased to exist.

Nearing the end of my travels, I know
there are millions and millions of rooms all
equally indifferent to my entrances and exits.

Yet I also know there are a few rooms,
in which I have been miserable or very happy,
where some tiny part of me remains for ever.

Remains for ever, softly echoing over and over
my laughter and tears, and the tears and laughter
of all who have shared those rooms with me.

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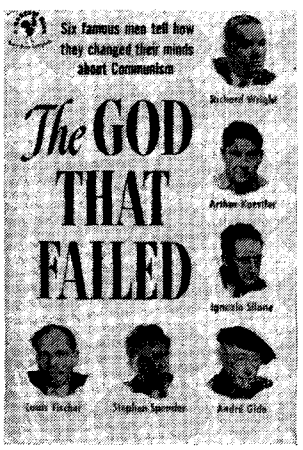
# Why "The God that Failed" Failed . . . .

*By Norman Podhoretz*




READING *The God that Failed* again after more than thirty years has been for me a poignant experience. I was only about twenty years old, a senior in college, the first time I read it, and I can still remember how dazzled and exhilarated it left me feeling. There are books of my youth that I have returned to in later life only to be disappointed or even mystified at the effect they once had on me. *The God that Failed* has not proved to be one of these books. Rereading it today, I can see easily enough why it should once have exerted so powerful an influence on my thinking about Communism. But today I can also see portents that were invisible to me then of problems that were to bedevil and confuse the discussion of Communism in the decades ahead. The full emergence of these problems in the 1980s is what adds a touch of poignancy to *The God that Failed* for someone like myself who first encountered it in the early 1950s. But it is also what makes this book more than merely a historical curiosity for the reader who is coming upon it for the first time today.

To understand the power and influence of *The God that Failed* when it was originally published, it is necessary to bear in mind that Communism in those early days of "the Cold War" was the single most salient issue of political concern throughout the Western world. This had by no means been the case in the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the Cold War. From the mid-1930s until the mid-1940s, the Soviet Union itself and the Communist parties in other countries (all of which were under the direct control of Moscow) had done everything they could to blur the distinction between Communism on the one side and democratic socialism or liberalism on the other. In a still earlier phase, Communists had had nothing but contempt for "bourgeois" liberals and their values and had professed to see no difference between fascists and democratic socialists. But in response to the threat posed by the rise of Hitler in Germany, the Soviet Union under Stalin thought it the better part of prudence to seek alliances with the formerly despised bourgeois democracies. At that point, Communists everywhere suddenly changed their "line" and began representing themselves as "liberals in a hurry"—that is, people who differed from New Deal Democrats in the United States (or supporters of the various socialist parties in other countries who had previously been regarded by the Communists as "social fascists") only in the degree of their zealous impatience for the creation of a better world.

During the Second World War, the Communists were if anything even more eager to blur the distinction between democracy and Communism in the interests of the Soviet alliance with the Western democracies against the Axis powers. It was only in the post-War period that the line changed once again in the direction of revolutionary militancy, carrying in its train a renewed hostility toward "bourgeois" liberalism and democratic socialism.

THANKS TO these many twists and turns, the discussion of the Soviet Union and of Communism (the two were still interchangeable) had been thoroughly corrupted by mendacity on the one side and naivety or credulousness on the other. It was into the resultant intellectual darkness that a series of flares was fired, of which *The God that Failed* was one of the brightest (two others, for me, being Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and Whittaker Chambers's *Witness*).

In one way or another, all these books



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attempted to show that Communism had more in common with Nazism and Fascism than with liberalism or democratic socialism. This being the case, with the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II the Soviet Union had emerged as the single greatest threat on earth to the democratic values it had so recently professed to have realised much "more fully" than the Western democracies themselves and which it had claimed to be fighting for against Hitler and his allies.

Indeed, from the point of view of most of these writers, Communism was more dangerous than Nazism or Fascism precisely because it exerted a much greater ideological appeal. Nazism frankly and nakedly set itself against all democratic values, preaching doctrines such as the innate inferiority of non-"Aryan" races that were inherently repugnant to anyone raised in the traditions of the West. Hence its power rested mainly on brute force and could be successfully resisted by force alone. Communism was subtler and more insidious. It had come into the world, it said, not to repeal the liberal democratic order but to fulfil it. At various moments the Communists might openly acknowledge that this fulfilment could be achieved only by a violent overthrow of the existing system; or for tactical reasons they might pretend to believe that it could be achieved peacefully and without recourse to revolution. But whatever the means advocated, the end envisioned was a world in which the liberal democratic order would supposedly be brought to a higher stage of development and finally perfected by the abolition of capitalism and its attendant inequalities and injustices.

For this reason, while Communism was no less dangerous to the body than Nazism or Fascism—in the simple sense that it too rested on force and brutal repression—it was more dangerous to the mind. Therefore it was particularly dangerous to people who lived the life of the mind—people to whom ideas and ideologies were meat and drink (or, in many cases, bread and wine). It was this which explained the paradoxical susceptibility of intellectuals to Communism. Paradoxical because intellectuals were accorded a position in the Communist scheme subordinate to that of the working class which—a correlative paradox—had on the whole been less susceptible to the appeal of Communism despite its placement at the very centre of Communist theory.

*The God that Failed* set out to explore this paradox through accounts by six famous intellectuals of how and why they had become Communists (either actually joining the Communist Party or acting as "fellow-travellers"—that is, loyal supporters and apologists from outside) and how and why they had eventually broken. All six were writers, but otherwise they varied widely in background. Arthur Koestler had come to England from Hungary by way of Austria and Germany, and was by the time of *The God that Failed* internationally famous both as a novelist and as a political analyst. Ignazio Silone was perhaps the best-known Italian novelist of the day, and Richard Wright enjoyed a comparable position among Negro American writers. André Gide's reputation is not so great today, but in 1950 he was widely regarded as the greatest living French novelist and perhaps the leading man of letters in the whole of Europe. Louis Fischer, the least considerable of the six even then and almost completely forgotten today, was in his time a major figure in the world of international journalism. Finally, there was Stephen Spender, by then also famous on both sides of the Atlantic for his poetry and criticism. R. H. S. Crossman (who conceived the idea for *The God that Failed* in collaboration with Koestler and then wrote the introduction) was already both an influential political journalist and an important politician on the Labour Left.

I stress the fame and prestige of the authors of *The God that Failed* because these attributes were essential to the main effect the book had on me (and, I feel sure, on most of its original readers). It took a book like Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism* (1952) to refute the idea that Communism and Nazism stood at opposite ends of the political spectrum and to establish the theoretical case for seeing them both as totalitarian systems, embodiments of the most highly developed form of despotism known to human history, a despotism which embraced not merely the political sphere but every area of life. But it took a book like *The God that Failed*, with its rich collection of personal testimony from so many literary celebrities, to legitimate anti-Communism, to make it a respectable and even a mandatory political position within the American intellectual community, no less mandatory than anti-Nazism or anti-Fascism had been in that community since the 1930s.

Of course the authors of *The God that Failed* were neither the first nor even necessarily the most prominent anti-Communist intellectuals in the West. Philosophers like Bertrand Russell in England and John Dewey in America had arrived at an anti-Communist position long before any of the contributors to this book and without an intervening period of commitment to Communism. But when Koestler told Crossman that "we ex-Communists are the only people ... who know what it's about"—or when Silone said to the Italian Communist leader Togliatti that the final battle would be between the Communists and the ex-Communists—they were right in claiming a special intimate sense of the true nature of Communism usually absent from the writings of anti-

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Communists who had never fallen victim to its wiles and allures.

THAT THE ex-Communists were always being accused of "lying" by their former friends and comrades went without saying; and lying was the least of the accusations hurled at these apostates from the true faith who were shunned and vilified, whose reputations were besmirched and whose characters assassinated. But the ex-Communists were even a little suspect in the eyes of other anti-Communists, who were always accusing them of exaggerating or of overdramatising. "You hate our Cassandra cries", Crossman quotes Koestler as complaining to him in the conversation out of which the idea for this book was born. Crossman with characteristic enthusiasm responded by challenging Koestler to tell his story, and as he listened, it suddenly occurred to him that "This should be a book." Evidently there was something the ex-Communist knew that "all you comfortable, insular, Anglo-Saxon anti-Communists" (as Koestler called them) were unable to grasp. In the end, Crossman was forced to acknowledge that Koestler was right.

> "No one who has not wrestled with Communism as a philosophy, and Communists as political opponents, can really understand the values of Western democracy. The Devil once lived in Heaven, and those who have not met him are unlikely to recognise an angel when they see one."

WHAT WAS IT that these ex-Communists knew that an anti-Communist like Richard Crossman did not really know? Obviously the facts about the Soviet Union were as available to people who had never been Communists as they were to those who had. Anyone who took the trouble to look could see that the Soviet Union, far from being "more democratic" than the United States or the West European countries, was a society in the grip of a totalitarian system as thoroughgoing and as brutal as Nazi Germany. Anyone who took the trouble to look could see that there was little freedom of any kind there, and that even the value of equality—the prime value, after all, of Soviet political culture—had not been and was unlikely ever to be more fully realised in the Soviet Union than in the democratic world. Anyone who took the trouble to look could see that the economic problems of capitalism and the sufferings they caused were mild as compared with the terrible poverty of Russia and the wholesale starvation and murder involved in the forced collectivisation of agriculture. Anyone who took the trouble to look could see that the Soviet Union, far from being the spearhead of a new internationalism in world affairs, and far from being the "only reliable bulwark against Fascism", would unhesitatingly betray the anti-Fascist cause (as Stalin did in signing a treaty with Hitler in August 1939) if it suited the national interests of the Soviet state; that, far from being the great opponent of imperialism, the Soviet Union was seizing the opportunity presented by its military successes in the Second World War to establish a new empire; that, far from being peace-loving, the Soviet Union was maintaining its armies at wartime strength and threatening to extend its imperial sway beyond the domains of Eastern Europe which it was already ruling by force.

It is a source of continual astonishment that many people neither knew nor saw these things. Some of these were, of course, Communists or fellow-travellers who had yet to encounter what Louis Fischer in his contribution to *The God that Failed* called their "Kronstadt" (that is, the episode that decisively shattered their illusions about the Soviet Union). But there were many others who were neither Communists nor fellow-travellers in the strict sense of being ready to accept every twist-and-turn in the party line, and who were yet unable or unwilling to face the truth about the Soviet Union. Such people, who generally thought of themselves as "liberals" (a title to which they had no solid claim even though they successfully managed to identify themselves with it in their own eyes and the eyes of the media), adamantly refused to believe that the Soviet Union was as bad as it appeared to be or that Communists were anything more than "liberals in a hurry." Inclined always to give the Soviet Union the benefit of the doubt, ready always with an apologetic explanation for anything the Russians did, they were equally ready to treat the Communists as participants, along with all other right-minded, decent, progressive people, in the struggle for social justice at home.

The point about these "liberals" is that they simply could not take Communism *seriously*. Even when the Communists themselves were no longer claiming that Communism (as Earl Browder, the leader of the American Communist party, once described it in the heyday of the Popular Front) was "twentieth-century Americanism", these "liberals" persisted in their illusions. And even in the face of one "Kronstadt" after another—the violent suppression by the Red Army of a sailors' revolt at Kronstadt itself in the early 1920s; the murder of millions of peasants who resisted the collectivisation of agriculture in the early 1930s; the Stalinist purges and show trials of the mid-30s; the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939; the establishment of Communist puppet régimes in East Europe in the 1940s—the same "liberals" went on denying that the Soviet Union was an expansionist

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totalitarian state with a closer resemblance to Nazi Germany than to any of the democracies of the West.

NOR WERE ILLUSIONS about the Soviet Union to be found only among "liberals." A good many businessmen who thought of themselves as "conservatives" and anti-Communists nevertheless seized upon every opportunity to help the Soviet Union develop its industrial base. Without such help, it is unlikely that the Soviet Union would ever have grown into the military superpower it eventually became. If we ask ourselves how and why Western capitalists should have done all this, only part of the answer was "the profit motive", the quest for dividends (which, incidentally, usually turned out to be either illusory or disappointing). The other and perhaps more important part was the same refusal to take Communism seriously as an ideology or the Soviet Union earnestly as an enemy that characterised the "liberal" attitude.

But to return to Richard Crossman, who unlike certain "liberals" *did* know the truth about the Soviet Union (and unlike certain "conservatives" *was* an anti-Communist)—he had doubtless learned to take Communism seriously even though he had never been a Communist himself. Even so, there is a breeziness about his introduction to *The God that Failed* that belies his own characterisation of Communism as the "devil." He writes in a tone that stands in very sharp contrast indeed to the tone in which the six ex-Communists in the book talk about the issue. One can see why Koestler accused Crossman of being "comfortable" and "insular." Crossman could explain Communism, could recognise what was wrong with it, and could analyse its appeal. But what he was unable to do was to convey a sense of the urgency and magnitude of the struggle against Communism. For this the ex-Communists, with their "Cassandra cries", were required (as

## *Koestler*

A FAITH *is not acquired by reasoning. One does not fall in love with a woman, or enter the womb of a church, as a result of logical persuasion. Reason may defend an act of faith—but only after the act has been committed, and the man committed to the act. Persuasion may play a part in a man's conversion; but only the part of bringing to its full and conscious climax a process which has been maturing in regions where no persuasion can penetrate. A faith is not acquired; it grows like a tree. Its crown points to the sky; its roots grow downward into the past and are nourished by the dark sap of the ancestral humus.*

**From the psychologist's point of view, there is little difference between a revolutionary and a traditionalist faith. All true faith is uncompromising, radical, purist; hence the true traditionalist is always a revolutionary zealot in conflict with pharisaian society, with the lukewarm corrupters of the creed. And vice versa: the revolutionary's Utopia, which in appearance represents a complete break with the past, is always modelled on some image of the lost Paradise, of a legendary Golden Age. The classless Communist society, according to Marx and Engels, was to be a revival, at the end of the dialectical spiral, of the primitive Communist society which stood at its beginning. Thus all true faith involves a revolt against the believer's social environment, and the projection into the future of an ideal derived from the remote past. All Utopias are fed from the sources of mythology; the social engineer's blueprints are merely revised editions of the ancient text.**

DEVOTION *to pure Utopia, and revolt against a polluted society, are thus the two poles which provide the tension of all militant creeds. To ask which of the two makes the current flow—attraction by the ideal or repulsion by the social environment—is to ask the old question about the hen and the egg. To the psychiatrist, both the craving for Utopia and the rebellion against the status quo are symptoms of social maladjustment. To the social reformer, both are symptoms of a healthy rational attitude. The psychiatrist is apt to forget that smooth adjustment to a deformed society creates deformed individuals. The reformer is equally apt to forget that hatred, even of the objectively hateful, does not produce that charity and justice on which a utopian society must be based.*

*Thus each of the two attitudes, the sociologist's and the psychologist's, reflects a half-truth. It is true that the case-history of most revolutionaries and reformers reveals a neurotic conflict with family or society. But this only proves, to paraphrase Marx, that a moribund society creates its own morbid gravediggers.*

*It is also true that in the face of revolting injustice the only honourable attitude is to revolt, and to leave introspection for better times. But if we survey history and compare the lofty aims, in the name of which revolutions were started, and the sorry end to which they came, we see again and again how a polluted civilisation pollutes its own revolutionary offspring.*

*Arthur Koestler*
*(1949)*

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Crossman himself must have recognised in conceiving the idea for this book).

Not, however, any and all ex-Communists. Obviously Crossman and Koestler wanted, as they said, "ex-Communists capable of telling the truth about themselves", which for all practical purposes meant intellectuals who could also write. But here again there was an exclusionary principle at work which becomes clear when we notice the absence of another category of ex-Communist intellectuals among whom could be found any number "capable of telling the truth about themselves" at least as well as those included in *The God that Failed*. This category was made up of those who had not only repudiated Communism as embodied in the Soviet Union, but who had also repudiated other variants of socialism and even Marxism itself as a philosophy. Some, like Max Eastman, became believers in and defenders of capitalism; others, like Whittaker Chambers, came to see belief in God as the ultimate defence against Communism. Neither of these types was represented in *The God that Failed*.

Instead, what Crossman and Koestler put together was a chorus of testimony against Communism from ex-Communists who had remained in some sense on the Left. It was a book which said, in effect, that one could be an anti-Communist without ceasing to be a liberal (in the American sense) or a socialist or even a Marxist—that, indeed, Communism was in reality the enemy of the true values of liberalism and Marxian socialism. To become an anti-Communist did not necessarily mean joining forces with the Right (which was thought by the Left to be as "soft" on Fascism as the Left was suspected of being on Communism). But short of supporting Fascism, opposition to Communism did not, according to Stephen Spender, even entail support for capitalism:

> "In writing this essay, I have always been aware that no criticism of the Communists removes the arguments against capitalism. The effect of these years of painful experiences has only been to reveal to me that both sides are forces producing oppression, injustice, destruction of liberties, enormous evils."

NOW IT MUST be said that *The God that Failed* would not in all likelihood have contributed so greatly to the legitimation of anti-Communism among writers and intellectuals if it had gone much further than it did. Certainly the examples of Max Eastman and Whittaker Chambers, who had virtually no influence at all in the literary world, suggest as much. At the same time, however, this must also be said: in refusing to recognise that democratic capitalism was one of the indispensable constituent elements of Western liberty—that in itself it embodied a form of freedom and was on that account to be valued by all who valued freedom; and that, even as Spender was hurling his accusations, it was achieving a greater degree of widely shared prosperity throughout the Western world than anyone had ever dreamed possible of any economic system—the anti-Communism of these writers found no moorings in the real world and was cut loose to float in a utopian void. For if capitalism was (as Spender declared) as bad as Communism, where was one to turn?

In 1950, the answer seemed clear to most, or perhaps all, of the contributors to *The God that Failed* (and to most if not all of their readers, myself emphatically included): some form of democratic socialism which would combine the virtues of the two systems and avoid the vices of both. Today, more than thirty years later, this answer seems to me to be based on some of the same illusions as the belief in Communism once was. The American philosopher William Barrett has written of himself and other refugees from Marxism who for a time found rest in the ideal of democratic socialism:

> "How could we ever have believed that you could deprive human beings of the fundamental right to initiate and engage in their own economic activity without putting every other human right in jeopardy? And to pass from questions of rights to those of fact: everything we observe about the behavior of human beings in groups ... should tell us that you cannot unite political and economic power in one center without opening the door to tyranny."

In other words, to reject Communism while trying to hold on to Marxist collectivism or state socialism in some other form was—and is—intellectually insufficient. It left one in the position of blaming Stalin or Lenin or the special condition of Russia for the "perversion" or "betrayal" of the true heritage of Marxian socialism. In this way one remained free to go on believing in the utopian dreams of a transformed and redeemed world. Anyone under the sway of such utopian dreams was likely to evade the actual choices presented by reality in the here-and-now. However different the available alternatives might be as compared with each other, they were all bound to seem more or less equally undesirable by the standards of that "socialism" for whose full realisation it was morally necessary to go on hoping and working.

ON THE ONE SIDE, then, the rejection of Communism by itself could still leave one open to an endless repetition of the same political misjudg-

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ments that had been made in relation to the Soviet Union. To be sure, this was not generally the case with the authors of *The God that Failed* or most of the ex-Communists who had broken with the Party by 1950. Their ideas might remain arrested in Marxism, but their first-hand experience of Communism protected them from being led too far astray in taking the measure of other manifestations of the "god" that had failed them in his original incarnation. This brand of anti-Communism turned out, however, to be a much less effective antitoxin when absorbed by people who had not actually suffered from the disease themselves—people, that is, who had never been Communists (or even loyal fellow-travellers) and who began by accepting the disillusioned view of the Soviet Union with which the ex-Communists ended.

For such people, the tradition represented by *The God that Failed* was certainly enough, and more than enough, to prevent the recurrence of illusions about the nature of Soviet Communism. But it turned out to be inadequate as a protection against comparable illusions, especially as applied to what would later be called the Third World. Had socialism failed or been betrayed in the Soviet Union? No matter: it would succeed in China; or if not there, in Cuba; or if not there, in Chile; or if not there, in Viet Nam; or if not there, in Nicaragua. No failure, whatever its cost in human misery, need discredit the dream. In every new instance, it deserved the benefit of the doubt; *a priori* it had a superior claim to the support of all humane and decent people than the side against which it was fighting. Thus the critic Susan Sontag, whose "Kronstadt" finally came in 1982 after the imposition of martial law in Poland (though she was, in her own words, "never a Communist and therefore not ... a 'repentant' ex-Communist of the god-who-failed variety"):

> "We tried to distinguish *among* Communisms—for example, treating 'Stalinism,' which we disavowed, as if it were an aberration, and praising

## *Silone*

THE AGITATION *which my recent experiences had aroused in me went far beyond politics. These "inexcusable historical forms" to which we must bow down—what were they but a new version of the inhuman reality against which, in declaring ourselves Socialists, we had rebelled? I felt at that time like someone who has had a tremendous blow on the head and keeps on his feet, walking, talking and gesticulating, but without fully realising what has happened.*

**Realisation came, however, slowly and with difficulty during the course of the succeeding years. And to this day I go on thinking it over, trying to understand better. If I have written books, it has been to try and understand and to make others understand. I am not at all certain that I have reached the end of my efforts. The truth is this: the day I left the Communist Party was a very sad one for me, it was like a day of deep mourning, the mourning for my lost youth. And I come from a district where mourning is worn longer than elsewhere. It is not easy to free oneself from an experience as intense as that of the underground organization of the Communist Party. Something of it remains and leaves a mark on the character which lasts all one's life. One can, in fact, notice how recognisable the ex-Communists are. They constitute a category apart, like ex-priests and ex-regular officers. The number of ex-Communists is legion today. "The final struggle", I said jokingly to Togliatti recently, "will be between the Communists and the ex-Communists."**

HOWEVER, *I carefully avoided, after I had left the Communist Party, ending up in one of the many groups and splinter-groups of ex-Communists; and I have never regretted this in any way, as I know well the kind of fate which rules over these groups and splinter-groups, and makes little sects of them which have all the defects of official Communism—the fanaticism, the centralisation, the abstraction—without the qualities and advantages which the latter derives from its vast working-class following. The logic of opposition at all costs has carried many ex-Communists far from their starting-points, in some cases as far as Fascism.*

**Consideration of the experience I have been through has led me to a deepening of the motives for my separation which go very much further than the circumstantial ones by which it was produced. But my faith in Socialism (to which I think I can say my entire life bears testimony) has remained more alive than ever in me. In its essence, it has gone back to what it was when I first revolted against the old social order; a refusal to admit the existence of destiny, an extension of the ethical impulse from the restricted individual and family sphere to the whole domain of human activity, a need for effective brotherhood, an affirmation of the superiority of the human person over all the economic and social mechanisms which oppress him. As the years have gone by, there has been added to this an intuition of man's dignity and a feeling of reverence for that which in man is always trying to outdistance itself, and lies at the root of his eternal disquiet.**

*Ignazio Silone*
*(1949)*

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other régimes, outside of Europe, which had and have essentially the same character."

Just as it was not enough intellectually to be anti-Communist, so it was not enough politically to be anti-Soviet. Since the authors of *The God that Failed* took the Soviet Union seriously, they knew (most of the time anyway) that expansionism was inherent in its very nature as a revolutionary Communist state; they also knew that its spread to other countries was an evil to be resisted. And since the only power that could effectively resist this evil was the United States, they had no choice but to support the new American determination to "contain" the Soviet empire within the boundaries set by the end of the Second World War. But this reliance on America to defend the world against the spreading tide of a system morally comparable to Nazism (against which the United States had also gone to war) still brought with it at most a grudging acknowledgment that the United States was "the lesser of two evils." As Arthur Koestler once said in a different context: "The choice before us is merely that between a grey twilight and total darkness." And Stephen Spender, in *The God that Failed* itself, refused to concede even that much to the United States. "America, the greatest capitalist country", he wrote, "seems to offer no alternative to war, exploitation and destruction of the world's resources...." This, at a time when capitalist America was offering peace, freedom, and prosperity to formerly fascist countries like Germany, Italy, and Japan—as well as to the war-torn and wounded democracies of Western Europe which it had just expended blood and treasure to save from the totalitarianism of the Right, and which it was now prepared to spend blood and treasure to defend from the totalitarianism of the Left.

THE NEUTRALIST ATTITUDE expressed in Spender's statement was the political face of the intellectual utopianism in which so many anti-Communists of the Left remained trapped. To be anti-Soviet while being simultaneously anti-American might ensure that the fastidious political sensibilities of a romantic poet like Spender would not be offended by a commitment to anything less than perfect. In the long run, however, such an attitude could not protect the world from the spread of Soviet power.

This should have been clear even in 1950, and clearer still in 1980 when the decline of American power in the post-Viet Nam era had left Western Europe more exposed than ever to the ever-growing threat of Soviet power. Yet the utopian fantasy of escape from the actual alternatives offered by reality in the here-and-now had by 1980 become more widespread, with the neutralist position foreshadowed by Spender in *The God that Failed* becoming prevalent throughout the European Left.

Moreover, at a time when hardly anyone, not even many Communists, still entertained the old illusions about the Soviet Union from which *The God that Failed* recorded an earlier retreat—the idea that the Soviet Union was a "workers' paradise" and the model for "a better world"—masses of people in the West, including many non-Communists, were being seduced by a new set of illusions about the Soviet Union. Now they were persuading themselves that the Soviet Union was devoted to peace and stability, and they were disseminating a new "line" of apologetics according to which everything warlike and aggressive the Russians did on the international scene was a "defensive response" to "bellicose American provocations."

It has become clear in retrospect, then (and poignantly so for me), that the kind of anti-Communism legitimised in *The God that Failed* was shot through with too many reservations and qualifications to stand firm against the pressures of the years ahead. Nevertheless the book performed an enormous service for its time. It is therefore worth reading, and rereading, for its interest both as a classic historical document and as a cautionary object lesson. But it also demands to be read in its own right, for the light it continues to shed on the illusions about Communism that refuse to die in spite of one "Kronstadt" after another, and on the appeal those illusions continue to hold for so many writers and intellectuals who also remain as obdurately blind today to the values and virtues of democratic capitalism as utopian poets were in 1950.

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# THEATRE

# Pinter's Progress

## By Roger Scruton

IMPORTANT PLAYWRIGHTS do not just interpret the world; they also change it. Since their invention the Shakespearean types have dominated both life and literature, and there is scarcely a suburban residence in modern England that could not be adapted to the dramatic requirements of a Falstaff, a Lear, or a Hamlet. Jonson, Sheridan, and Congreve added their quota of charlatans and fops, while Beaumarchais and Goldoni taught the lower orders to share the limelight with their masters. The theatrical moulding of human personality continued until the novel—that secret weapon of the bourgeoisie—captured the market in manners. Under the impact of Smollett and Dickens the theatre dwindled into melodrama. The swan-songs of Oscar Wilde and Noël Coward provided splendid caricatures; but it was soon perceived that they are of limited utility. Lady Bracknell may hack her way through social undergrowth; but what does she do at the breakfast table, and what does she do in bed? You can be Hamlet anywhere, and at any time, but Lady Bracknell only in company, and at most once a day. Roles which have such circumscribed application are of little service to the modern person, whose life is mainly conducted in private, and who seeks guidance in the most intimate predicaments.

Ibsen's characters announced this new state of being to the world. They came on to the stage clad in roles which hampered them and which they were visibly impatient to discard. They sought for a tone of voice adapted to the solitude to which fate had consigned them. Out of desire to be deeper than appearances, they harboured private, even anti-social, intentions. By a miracle Ibsen transformed their lives into drama. He forced communication from creatures too stark and self-preoccupied to measure their words by any public standard of decorum. As a result, they were destroyed by the enormity of their own language, driven to tragic finality by the rash exaggeration of their speech. In Ibsen's drama it is the very failure of the characters to become characteristic that constitutes the success and meaning of the play. Hence there is no theatre less theatrical, no theatre less able to renew our wardrobe of worn-out social roles.

THE 20TH-CENTURY STAGE has shown a remarkable reversion to type. Habituated to the monstrosities of Ibsen, critics did not at first understand the language of Samuel Beckett's tramps, or Pinter's proles. What is in fact pure, distilled, social utterance, was passed off as "Theatre of the Absurd", whose merits were no different from those of Eugène Ionesco. It seemed impossible that people, real people, should speak like this, that they should walk about the stage without once mentioning some weight of moral isolation, some individual suffering or tragic destiny. Slowly, however, the public began to accept the new tones of voice.

Of course, it was a long chalk from Shakespeare. Nevertheless, here were styles, manners, qualities of experience, that could be taken from the sparse situations on the stage and applied repeatedly, from day to day. The idioms of Beckett and Pinter were as adaptable as Falstaff's bluster or Hamlet's grief. You could use them at parties, at meals, in the factory, on the bus. You could pick up girls with them, nor did they let you down in bed. To be a Beckett tramp or a Pinter prole gave you a handle on experience. It filled the voice with meaning, endowed hesitations with a kind of integrity, and lent authority equally to words and to silences. Although Beckett and Pinter have less in common than meets the eye, nevertheless they share a fundamental premise: their characters are raw, vulnerable, dangerously exposed to one another. They speak words care-



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fully, with painful consideration, as though every excess of communication puts their existence at risk. Words are swords to them, but also shields. The characters are ill at ease in company, but alert to language. Hence their utility for the modern theatre-goer, who lives, eats, drinks and breathes embarrassment, and who is never more embarrassed than by his recognition that he has no great message, and no private destiny, to convey.

SINCE his majestic attempt to "eff the ineffable" in the trilogy of novels, Beckett's literary career has involved a paring away, a steady elimination of all embellishments to his central theme. Although Beckett defines social sentiments, in social language, he has, in the end, only one character, and that character is a living ("if you call that living") contradiction: the self who struggles vainly to be the object of its own regard, the ghost which flits before every aspiration. To present this theme, Beckett originally required hallucinatory details, aborted stories, quarrelsome observations, narrated by subjects who fade first into each other, and then into the page. Beckett's subsequent minimalism is a stylistic achievement, an emancipation from redundancies.

Pinter's career has been in a way comparable. The new triptych of short tableaux, *Other Places* (premiered in London this autumn at the Cottesloe Theatre), when seen in relation to *The Birthday Party*, or *The Caretaker*, represents a considerable economy and condensation. But Pinter's minimalism, while influenced by Beckett, is quite unrelated to the style or meaning of Beckett's recent playlets and pamphlets. It proceeds, not from the attempt to whittle down a single experience to its metaphysical pith, but rather from a constant venturing into new realms of experience, so that hesitation and silence take on increasingly masterful forms. Beckett's tone of voice is tetchy, disappointed, a kind of *gran rifiuto*, in the face of the perpetual elusiveness both of the "thou" and the "I." Pinter's voice has no such universal meaning. While it grows always from the impossible confrontation of human beings and their arbitrary desires, it varies minutely with the situation to which it is applied. Pinter's scenarios are carefully observed and ultra-realistic representations of English society. There has been a marked "upward mobility" over time; but even the most recent pieces remain wedded to actual situations, studied by an author whose ear for ordinary speech is preternaturally fine.

*Family Voices* (the first of the three tableaux) tells of a house in which characters from all periods of Pinter's career are assembled: a sluttish, good-for-nothing Mrs Withers; an old proletarian Mr Withers; another Mr Withers whose insane theatricality allows Pinter to recapture the set-piece style of the early plays; even a Lady Withers, whose title, however, proves baffling to the adolescent narrator. In this play, as in *Landscape*, there is no dialogue, only interlocking speech, as one character's voice flows into the silence vacated by the other's. A mother and a son write to each other letters which are never sent, or which, if sent, never arrive at their destination. To their lonely, reaching voices, a third is added, that of the man, husband of the one, father of the other, who has died since contact was lost. The situation deprives Pinter of the device with which he established his tone of voice, the familiar English repartee. The tense atmosphere of *The Caretaker* depends upon a to-ing and fro-ing of question and answer, from which the set speeches emerge as declarations of a longing comic in its ordinariness, and pathetic in its inability to elicit a response. *Family Voices* consists of questions which cannot be answered, and answers that wing off into the void in hopeless search for questions that would explain them. Were the mother and son actually to make contact, one feels, the intensity of their communication would be unbearable. But their non-communication is the source of a new comedy and pathos, as each slowly adjusts to the absence of the other.

The connection which is feared and longed for in *Family Voices* is granted in the sequel, *Victoria Station*. A cab-driver is contacted by his controller, who speaks from an office upstage, while the driver answers from the illuminated car below. Brilliant acting from Paul Rogers and Martin Jarvis turns this little *jeu d'esprit* into high comedy, although again with a note of pathos. The controller, who obtains only bizarre, vacant-seeming responses, is at first exasperated, then angry, and then filled with loathing for this *274* who lies like a barrier across the stream of ordinary experience. But the loathing turns to need, and finally to a kind of tenderness; the driver likewise develops a need for the controller, imploring him not to seek the services of any rival. "Don't have anything to do with *135*", he cries, "He's not your man. He'll lead you into blind alleys by the dozen. They all will. Don't leave me. I'm your man. I'm the only one you can trust. . . ." And strangely, despite *274*'s inability to understand the simplest order, his words ring true.

The two characters are in the original Pinter mould: ordinary people suddenly thrown out of orbit by an arbitrary act of communication. But words, cast across the distance between the office and the cab, acquire unpredictable meanings. The characters become increasingly vulnerable with every verbal impact. By the time the scene fades it is clear that their lives have been irreversibly transformed. The controller leaves his office in search of the driver, like a man who turns his back on home and family for the sake of some catastrophic love.

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*A Kind of Alaska* the final tableau, continues the theme of distance. However, the distance is not of space but of time.

A victim of sleeping sickness (such as described by Oliver Sacks in *Awakenings*) is brought to life by an injection of *L-Dopa*, after 29 years of comatose inertia. The play describes her bewildered reaction, a child's soul in a middle-aged body, the fallen face of a ruined aunt, who listens to a voice, her own voice, describing birthdays, boy-friends, and parties. Judi Dench's stunning performance conveys both the fear of the woman, and the forthright, virtuous cheekiness of the child, as they contend for possession of a body which has lain vacant for a generation. The woman, Deborah, is attended by a doctor, and by the doctor's wife, Deborah's younger sister. The effect of Deborah's illness is captured by the doctor's words: "Your sister was twelve when you were left for dead. When she was twenty I married her. She is a widow. I have lived with you. . . ." The words of the bystanders are succinct, hesitant, overcome, while the sufferer herself rushes into speech, stumbles, retreats, and then impetuously rushes again.

The scene is realistic, and uncompromisingly painful. It perfectly illustrates Pinter's boldness, and his appetite for new material, in which he shows a scrupulous attention to an actual, but uncanny, predicament. Beckett's Cartesian observer could never sustain such concentrated interest. The Beckettian subject lives only in the dark, the limedark of his ruminations. While filled with compassion, it is a compassion inspired by failure, itself born of metaphysical impossibility, to relate to the world or to himself. It is, in Malone's words, the "foul feeling of pity that I have often felt in the presence of things, especially little portable things in wood or stone, and which made me wish to have them about me and keep them always, so that I stooped and picked them up and put them in my pocket, often with tears, for I wept up to a great age, never having really evolved in the fields of affection and passion in spite of everything. . . ."

This is nothing like the fellow-feeling which Pinter carries into all predicaments, and which underlies his repeated disclosure that communication, far from being impossible, is in fact too much with us, a constant threat to our half-established natures. Words assail us with the inescapable fact of other people, and we try in vain to escape their accusations. "What do you mean by that?" asks Emma, in *Betrayal*. "I don't *mean* anything by it", replies Jerry. "But what are you trying to say by that?" she persists. "Jesus. I'm not *trying* to say anything. I've said precisely what I wanted to say." But the implication is firmly established that, merely by speaking, Jerry has said too much, or at least far more than he intended.

One feature of Deborah's situation might have appealed to Beckett: she is beyond the world, lodged in her body like a pilot in a sinking ship. Unlike Beckett, however, Pinter cannot accept the situation as anything other than abnormal. For him, as for Deborah herself, it is a terrible falling away from the life that is to be desired. Hence the situation becomes urgent; Deborah disconcerts us, like someone in an epileptic fit. The threat that lurks in language concentrates in her; we can pierce her in a thousand ways with knowledge; we can make her squirm. But because she is not in control of her experience, it is we who squirm, fearing our own aggression. Alone among Pinter's characters she is utterly alone. Her voice cries from an unreachable ultimacy of human experience, across an unbridgeable gulf of time. While we pity her, we do not know whether it is she, the child, or she, the woman, who evokes our sorrow.

The critics have been lavish in praise of *A Kind of Alaska*. But surely, whatever its merits, it cannot really be described as theatre. Deborah's unmanageable experience obliterates the drama. In the face of it, the subsidiary characters become gauche and frozen. None of the three can obtain a consistent tone of voice; in the nature of the case, every voice is suspect.

When Davies, the caretaker, describes his shoes, saying, "You see, they're gone, they're no good, the good's gone out of them", the idiom leaps out at us, joining us to the cheerful spirit of survival. In *Victoria Station*, the controller veneers his sentiments with idiom, saving us again from sharing his perplexity. In *A Kind of Alaska*, however, everything is stark, raw, absolute. The spectator, sensing the impossibility of response, suffers a growing discomfort. The Pinter voice no longer operates. . . . There is no consolation, no idiom, no normality. The spectator, outraged by sufferings which are without resolution, withdraws his futile sympathy.

Oliver Sacks was deeply disturbed by the effects of the drug *L-Dopa*. His description of the new miseries that were to confront his patients as they struggled, often in vain, to come to terms with the imperfect consciousness which their illness had left them, is heart-rending. It is hard to imagine a clearer refutation of the myth upon which Beckett has relied in all his writings—the myth of the transcendental spectator who lurks, untouched and untouchable, within the arbitrary folds of human flesh. Pinter has never given twopence for that myth. He rightly perceives that a nothing would do as well as this transcendental something about which nothing can be said. It is the writer's responsibility to study words; human beings exist, not behind, but within their utterance. Deborah is neither more nor less than the words which come from her. The theatre of embarrassment perpetually forces us to discard the illusion that there

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is an ego hiding behind our words. But this refutation of the ego creates a need for its opposite, for community, for idiom, for the consoling tone of voice which turns the individual into a type, and disaster into comedy.

ONCE, ON THE ROAD to Notting Hill, Pinter came across a tramp, a familiar of those parts, who sometimes wheels his pram-load of rags and newspapers beneath my window, muttering through a beard clotted with drying slobber.

On this occasion the tramp had set up his newspapers in a pile before him. The bundle was detached, immobile, outside the sphere of his possessions. He berated it in an angry voice; under the impact of his insults, the bundle acquired an ego, or at least, as much of an ego as the rest of us. Crime upon crime was laid at its feet. As the frenzy of denunciation increased, the passers-by began to steer further and further away from him, until stepping precariously in line, along the edge of the curb. The tramp was bathed in sweat, his face red and swollen, as though from the discomfort that he caused.

Pinter had joined the line, and then duly swerved away. But as he did so the ranting stopped, and the voice cried "*Hello, Harold Pinter!*"

The playwright froze; the cursing was resumed at once, more loudly than before, and the eyes of the blushing tramp remained fixed on the pile of offending newspapers. Pinter hurried on, away from the street theatre in which he had been typecast.

The tramp had recognised his author, but then turned from him towards the comfort of abusive words, refusing further contact. It was as though a choice had been made: Beckett or Pinter. The first gives you peace of a kind, but also immobility and isolation. The second gives you audience, meaning, social identity, but also a terrible consciousness of others. The tramp had chosen Pinter as his author, and then, in the very choice, regretted it, throwing himself with a renewed fervour into curses and insults. Deborah had made the same mistake, for she too could not survive the perception that she does not belong. She too was made untouchable by her rash and sudden contact; and she too, having no idiom to save her, blushingly suffered in the centre of the stage.

## One's People

My people, by whom I mean those curious sets
Of non-relations in provincial towns,
Sit ripening brightly in the Weltanschauung
Of other poets. Here is one who follows
A second-hand pair of shoes into the Courts
Of Social History. Another ransacks
His late unlettered father's bedside drawer
And finds dead ukeleles littered there.
What heraldic yet surreal landscapes!
To lie in the bed of your ancestors
And feel the fit. To hear the neighbourhood
Stirring in its ancient sleep and rhyme
The dead into their regiments of pain.
The poverty of old shoes runs away
With its own eloquence. And yet they write good books.

But I think of an England where the ghosts
Are restless solitaries or assassins.
They cannot speak but run about in sunlight
Demanding restoration of the birch
And death as public as the crime is private.
They have lost time. The Russians on Burns night
Celebrate their history of combustions.
Their people lie in complete unity
In graves as large as Europe and as lonely.

*George Szirtes*

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# NOTES & TOPICS

*A View of William James*

# The Philosopher as Literary Critic

*By Jacques Barzun*

NO TRUE critical mind was ever satisfied with his education, and on this point William James conformed to the rule. His had been on the surface a spotty education—a year or two at each institution, in four different countries. Even his medical training had been discontinuous, and his one year of painting at William Hunt's studio, side by side with John LaFarge, had reinforced the sense of waywardness and failure, even though the work done was well above average and LaFarge in later years looked back with admiration and some envy to his fellow pupil's gift of draughtsmanship. And in between all these abortive programmes and careers, an enormous amount of reading, in English, Latin, French, German, and Italian. On the one hand, philosophy and modern science; on the other, literature. French and German, it should be said, were languages that William James spoke and wrote fluently. His later philosophical papers in French are flawless. Thus, looked at with hindsight it was a perfect education.

All these accomplishments were attained in the teeth of poor health, weak eyesight, and alarming depression. The acquirements were in fact incidental to residence abroad not solely for study but for "cures." And with them went another element of education, the visual, at every museum and in every picturesque city. In Paris, it was Delacroix's work that was young James's ideal, not a surprising choice, given the presence in each man of the dramatic temperament and that dominant note of realism characteristic of every original romanticist.

No doubt James's studious admiration of the French master determined his own abandonment of painting. "Nothing is more contemptible", he wrote to a friend in explaining his decision, "than a mediocre artist." To be sure, James had had a long argument on the subject with his father, the religious philosopher Henry James, Sr. It must be unique in the annals of fathers and sons quarrelling about "going in for art." For Henry Sr's strenuous opposition to Willy's desire was not because being an artist was "unpractical", unlikely to bring in the livelihood that was now needed, owing to family losses and the prospective division of the estate among five children; nor was it because the father doubted his son's talent and chances of success. What he feared was that the profession of artist would not bring William the intellectual and spiritual satisfactions he craved and deserved.

THIS INCIDENT beautifully shows how the position of art has shifted since the father's youth. Henry Sr as an advanced thinker did believe that "the artist or producer is the only regenerate image of God in nature"; but the artist's profession was still questionable. When art came to be accepted in our century as the fit replacement of religion—a source of wisdom as well as the highest expression of the human spirit—the old philosopher's reasonable apprehension could no longer be understood. William belonged to a generation that accorded art the high seriousness we now take for granted, an attitude that permeates all his work in psychology and philosophy.

Throughout his life William James kept reading (sometimes reviewing) the new authors as well as returning to the old. His letters telling others what or whom he had just discovered tell us at the same time what he thought of Shaw's "exquisite" *Caesar and Cleopatra*, or Turgenev's or Hardy's or William Dean Howells' latest novel. He also succumbed, like the rest of the Western world, to the spell of the young Kipling ("Much of his present coarseness and jerkiness is youth only, divine youth"), though his admiration for some of the later works grew less.

Despite his disclaimer that he was deaf to poetry, James's prose is studded with quotations and allusions to the English poets from Crashaw to Francis Thompson, as well as to Dante, the Greek Anthology, and the great French and German writers. He felt the power and the vision in Zola's "truly magnificent" *Germinal*, and in *Madame Bovary* "the persistent *euphony*, a rich river that never foamed or ran thin." As for Renan, then a demigod to the French, James quite early detected in him, behind the music of the prose, foppish vagueness, insincerity, and pretension.

He was moved by the "art and spirituality" of Baudelaire at a time when his brother Henry James found little in *Les Fleurs du Mal* but "weeds plucked from the swamps of evil." William knew his Walt Whitman thoroughly, taught his students to enjoy him, and quoted him repeatedly and at length in his philosophical essays, though rejecting his voracious Oneness that engulfed all concrete things. He perceived, moreover, the difference between that poetic transcendentalism and Ralph



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Waldo Emerson's. He enjoyed reading Shakespeare through in chronological order—not just reading about him—and the upshot was equal surprise at the playwright's power and the amount of ranting and bombast, due no doubt to his "intolerable fluency." Independently of Shaw and Tolstoy, who were no idolators of the Bard, William James like them was puzzled by Shakespeare's lack of moral, cosmic, or other convictions; for he was close reader enough to see that in a work of fiction without a perceptible tendency, the characters' utterances cancel each other out and produce a species of nihilism. These judgments, like his objection to the monotony of Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* ("too much of an aviary") were not the conventional ones acquired in college. William James had never gone to college; his humanistic education was foreign; and we may be sure that his opinions owed nothing to low, middle, or high fashion: they were his own, formed without aid from literary cliques.[1]

FOR SOME STUDENTS of James's life and work, the vital test of his critical taste is his attitude toward the novels and tales of his brother Henry James. There is no question that the Jameses—father, mother, sister and brothers—were an intensely affectionate and spiritually united family, what I have called elsewhere an erotic-intellectual commune. One proof of this polygamy of true minds is that they read one another's works. Reading the productions of one's family is extremely unusual. And they went on to discuss them with candour and delight. Accordingly, for many years William's appreciation of Henry's work was sincere and unbounded—until Henry began to develop his "late manner." At that point, some have thought that William's coarser being came into view. He lost his critical poise and literary judgment, and condemned what his sensibility was not fine enough to take in.

One need not go into the reasons given for this alleged fall—some have believed that it was jealousy; others have said that to Henry's civilised perceptions and delicate art William was opposing his crude and "typically American" outlook. The word "Pragmatism" is then brought out with an air of discovery, in ignorance or forgetfulness of Henry's enthusiastic adherence to that theory of truth, coupled with the declaration that for his own part he had been a pragmatist all his life—as indeed every artist, at least in his art, must inevitably be. What one should consider in place of these modern mumblings is the brothers' recorded views about literature and about each other's works.

Here is the critical part of the letter that William wrote to Henry about *The Golden Bowl* and *The Wings of the Dove*. It begins, let it be noted in passing, with a remark about *The American Scene*, which William says seems to him "in its peculiar way *supremely great*." He goes on:

> "You know how opposed your whole 'third manner' of execution is to the literary ideals which animate my crude and Orson-like breast, mine being to say a thing in one sentence as straight and explicit as it can be made, and then to drop it forever; yours being to avoid naming it straight, but by dint of breathing and sighing all round and round it, to arouse in the reader who may have had a similar perception already (Heaven help him if he hasn't) the illusion of a solid object, made (like the 'ghost' at the Polytechnic) wholly out of impalpable materials, air, and the prismatic interferences of light, ingeniously focused by mirrors upon empty space. But you *do* it, that's the queerness! and

WILLIAM JAMES (*1865*)

[1] Henry James notes in his diary for 1905 (*The Notebooks of Henry James*, 321): "William's inspired transcript, on the exquisite little urn of Alice's ashes, William's divine gift to us and to *her*, of the Dantean lines:

*Dopo lungo exilio e martiro*
*Viene a questa pace.*

"After her long exile and torturing pain she has come to rest in peace." Henry's adjective "Dantean" correctly indicates "in the manner of Dante", for the lines do not occur in the poet's works. William was probably inspired by the neighbouring ideas expressed in *Paradiso*, X, 129 and XV, 148, and he relied on his memory, since *exilio* should have read *esilio* or *essilio*. Another partial model occurs in *Epistolae*, III, 24: but it is not likely that James read Dante's Latin works.

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> the complication of innuendo and associative reference on the enormous scale to which you give way to it does so *build out* the matter for the reader that the result is to solidify, by the mere bulk of the process, the like perception from which *he* has to start. As air, by dint of its volume, will weigh like a corporeal body; so his own poor little initial perception, swathed in this gigantic envelopment of suggestive atmosphere grows, like a germ into something vastly bigger and more substantial."[2]

Now that is criticism of the rarest kind, which, while objecting to the manner or method or substance of a work of art, none the less describes these exactly, vividly, and appreciates the effect without relishing it. William James admired without enjoying and said so fairly—not a word here of sarcasm or denigration or belittlement, which indeed no student of William's character would think possible about *any* subject of discourse, much less the work of the *"Dearest Henry", "Beloved H."*, whom he salutes at the head of every letter.

True, from the very intensity of that affection, and no doubt from habit as the elder and leader since boyhood, William goes on to warn, not hectoring, only pleading with the solicitude of love:

> "But it's the rummest method for one to employ systematically as you do nowadays; and you employ it at your peril. In this crowded and hurried reading age, pages that require such close attention remain unread and neglected. You can't skip a word if you are to get the effect, and 19 out of 20 worthy readers grow intolerant. The method seems perverse: 'Say it *out*, for God's sake', they cry, 'and have done with it.' And so I say now, give us *one* thing in your older, directer manner, just to show that, in spite of your paradoxical success in this unheard-of method, you *can* still write according to accepted canons."

The "paradoxical success" William refers to is that which he himself so fully perceives, not any success Henry had with readers and critics. Henry James in his final period lost them, bewildering them as he did *not* bewilder William. Except for a little band of faithful, it took some forty years for the third manner to justify itself and become fodder for academic dissertations. And to this day there are (and will continue to be) objectors, armed with tenable arguments against it.[3] Those put by William James imply no obtuseness or philistinism:

> "For gleams and innuendos and felicitous verbal insinuations, you are unapproachable, but the *core* of literature is solid. Give it to us *once* again!"[4]

In so urging, William James was inspired by unmixed devotion. He wanted for Henry the widest renown, the fulfilment of his manifest destiny as the greatest living American novelist. Henry was unmoved, quite properly. He had retorted in strong words to earlier hints of the same sort.

> "I mean (in response to what you write me of your having read the *Golden B.*) to try to produce some uncanny form of thing, in fiction, that will gratify you, as Brother—but let me say, dear William, that I shall be greatly humiliated

Henry James (*c. 1865*)

[2] *The Letters of William James* (1920) v.II, pp.277–78 and 240 (1 February 1906 and 4 May 1907).

[3] Having been among the earliest few to help turn the tide in Henry James's favour during the 1930s, I may acknowledge the force of these arguments without endorsing them and without losing an ounce of my enjoyment and admiration of the later novels. Their rightness or wrongness must be established, like all artistic merits and demerits, on the exactest pragmatic judgment.

[4] Mrs. Henry Adams, a person of true sensibility, spoke for many when she said of Henry in his third manner: "He chews more than he can bite off." And the English poet Francis Thompson, in reviewing *The Golden Bowl*, wrote: "The intellectuality overpowers the sensual and objective traits proper to a novel until one has the impression of reading an abstruse treatise of psychology rather than a tale." (*Literary Criticisms*, ed. T. L. Connolly, 1948, p.299.)

It was left for Van Wyck Brooks to characterise the third manner as a lamentable aberration—though it still holds the powerful spell William felt in it.

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if you *do* like it, and thereby lump it, in your affection, with things of the current age, that I have heard you express admiration for and that I would sooner descend to a dishonored grave than have written."[5]

The brothers knew how to take each other better than their biographers do: "your last was your delightful reply to my remarks about your 'third manner', wherein you said you would consider your bald head dishonored if you ever came to pleasing *me* by what you wrote, so shocking was my taste. Well! write only *for* me, and leave the question of pleasing open!" And William reiterates his clear perception of Henry's achievement: "I have to admit that in *The Golden Bowl* and *The Wings of the Dove* you have *succeeded in getting there* after a fashion, in spite of the perversity of the method and its *longness*." And after the critiques comes a due disclaimer of their authority: "For God's sake don't *answer* these remarks, which (as Uncle Howard used to say of Father's writings) are but the peristaltic belchings of my own crabbed organism."

THESE BROTHERLY EXCHANGES are exemplary. It is remarkable that literary artists—for William is, in his own genre, a literary master too—possessed of radically different aims should so far sympathise with each other's productions.

William James saw his own task as discerning, transfixing, and reproducing in concrete language the multiplicities of experience, in order to have it seen as the fundamental reality that we take in endless ways for as many purposes. Henry James, out to slay the *very same* conventions of life and thought, wanted to go beneath them into the ramifications of feeling, fantasy, and will concealed from ordinary sight. So his exhibiting could not be done through direct exposition like William's, but only through the presentation of the stuff itself: he must not tell, but show—and hence their divergent methods.

That both writers acquired from their father and the James home circle a comparable gift of language, a genius for imagery and similitudes, and the power to disentangle and describe the motions of the human mind, is what inspired the anonymous epigram that Henry wrote novels like a psychologist and William wrote psychology like a novelist. But the range of their tastes was not the same, as we just saw, and the "contemporary productions" that William admired and Henry dismissed show William—the sampling above is proof enough—as the more inclusive appreciator.

There is no need to set the two geniuses up against each other, like prizefighters to be rooted for by hostile groups of fans. Each perfectly fulfilled his creative destiny in literature. Each was also a literary critic, Henry in the full-fledged way as author of many superb essays and prefaces; William reflectively, as reader, and also casually, in talk and correspondence. Both had extraordinary scope. But the one had the advantage of sorting out his views in formal exposition; the other had the advantage of being himself a creator of fiction, and produced only for his own art the theory of its making. We know where to find Henry James's critical thought. William James's is scattered, abundantly, throughout his writings, which is but one more good reason for going back to them.

*International Commentary*

# The Turks, between Law & Disorder

## *By Andrew Mango*

I HAPPENED TO BE at a so-called working breakfast with the Prime Minister of Turkey some ten years ago. His name was Dr Nihat Erim, and he had been chosen a few months earlier by the high command of the armed forces in order to reform the country's government and remove the political and social causes of terrorist activity, which the generals were at that time suppressing by military means. An invitation to breakfast, let alone a working one, was not customary in Turkey; but then Dr Erim's government was modern and technocratic, and included two distinguished Turks brought in urgently from the United States (one from the World Bank and another from a university) as part of a team called, of course, the "Brains Trust." The Prime Minister received me in his temporary study in the official guest-house on Çankaya hill, overlooking the

[5] *Letter of Henry James* (1920), vol. II, p.43.

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sprawl of Ankara, where Atatürk's neat little capital lay sunk somewhere between the ring of new shanty-towns and equally new office blocks at the centre. But we were shielded from outside reality by northern conifers, as we bent our heads over boiled eggs and foreign constitutional textbooks (they lay open all over the room, with clauses and sentences underlined by the Prime Minister). The items that interested him all seemed to begin with the words "*provided that*" or "*except in so far as*." Dr Erim reached out to these Western democratic models as he drafted his amendments to the social and political rights, the checks-and-balances, written into the Constitution of 1961. That was the work of yet another set of Westward-looking intellectuals for another set of military rulers.

In 1961, the Turkish intellectual establishment had been solidly in favour of the new Constitution, designed to bar the way to "the dictatorship of the [backward] majority", a crime for which Prime Minister Adnan Menderes was expelled from power by the "first military intervention" of 1960 (and for which he paid with his life). But at the time of "the second military intervention", otherwise known as "the coup by memorandum" of 12 March 1971, the intellectuals were divided. The Brains Trust resigned after only a few months in power. Then Dr Erim was dismissed by Parliament, which had been briefly curbed by the military. However, it had to swallow his amendments. Then the military returned to their barracks and the country returned to full parliamentary democracy—and a revival of the strife, which the military intervention seemed in retrospect only to have exacerbated.

The amended Constitution proclaimed (in Article 11) that

> "none of the rights and liberties specified in this constitution may be used in order to eliminate human rights or liberties, or the indivisible integrity of the Turkish state, as a country or a nation, or the republic described in this constitution, by exploiting differences of language, race, class, religion or sect."

Nevertheless differences of language (mainly between Turks and Kurds), presumed race, class, religion and sect (between Sunnis and Shiah) came to the fore, as never before, as political life resumed in Turkey. The terrorism which magnified these differences assumed the scale of a civil war. This was ended on 12 September 1980, by "the third military intervention." But not before some 5,000 citizens—including Dr Nihat Erim—had been assassinated.

IN THE TWO YEARS which have followed the coup of 1979-80 the military have brought order to the affairs of the country by the usual means. The terrorists have been hunted down, real and presumed enemies of the established order have been arrested and put on trial, while the country and its citizens have been allowed to earn their livelihood and enjoy a standard of living which does not exceed as greatly as before the resources needed to sustain it. The generals have now, as they promised, had a Constitution drafted for them. It has been submitted to a referendum, and approved by a surprising 91% of the electorate. In 1983, politicians will be able to organise in political parties, under the terms of the new Constitution; and parliamentary elections will follow, not later than the spring of 1984. This the generals have also promised (and their record of keeping the letter of their promises is good, even although it does not give comfort to their opponents).

THE CONSTITUTION, in particular, has found little favour with the Turkish intellectuals who had welcomed its predecessor of 1961, and had put up, however unhappily, with the amendments of 1971. The generals can (and do) say: "If the Constitution of 1961 was so fine, why had the country become unmanageable by the civil power?" But this polemical retort does not stop criticism, because criticism is to a large degree based on a sound calculation of self-interest. It is, of course, natural that contenders for power should object to provisions which will allow the Chief of the General Staff, General Kenan Evren, to remain at the helm as constitutional President of the Republic (and the present chiefs of the armed services to remain in place as his assistants). It is equally natural for politicians to baulk at the provision which debars some of them for ten years, and others for five, from participating in active political life. But these objections refer to "transitional" provisions, and not to the Constitution proper. Nor do these transitional arrangements differ substantially from the measures put into effect in 1961 to the plaudits of most intellectuals.

Then too, the titular head of the junta, General Gürsel, became constitutional president, while ordinary members of the junta were made life senators. Politicians of the Democrat Party, whom the military had swept from power, were removed from the political field. Three were hanged, and most of the others imprisoned. But the opposition to the Democrats (the old Republican People's Party) benefited from the coup; and since it was traditionally the party of the intellectual establishment, the latter was entirely satisfied with the arrangement.

This time, the generals intend that none of the old politicians should benefit, at least in the short run. In the long run, survivors will re-emerge (just as the most skilful and the luckier of the old

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Democrats returned to power in the 1970s, and took their place alongside the new men to whom the generals had given a break). In the short run, the generals will not, of course, have to "import parliamentarians", to quote the joke of former Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel. There are more than enough Turks with political ambitions and an eye as open to the main chance, as had been Mr Demirel's, who owed his meteoric rise to the elimination of the Democrats in the 1960 coup. Mr Demirel's team had then been dubbed "the second eleven." Will "the third eleven" be more successful?

The new Constitution, which takes full account of yesterday's problems, is devised to give government a better chance. The problem was twofold: At the centre, Parliament was unable to sustain political stability and unwilling to dissolve itself before the end of its full term; and all round, society was progressively politicised and consequently polarised. Public agencies, including the police, were filled with the political supporters of transient ministers. There were religious ministries and liberal ministries, socialist and Kurdish nationalist municipalities, Right-wing and Left-wing universities and professional associations; and, towards the end, Right-wing and Left-wing provinces. In Trabzon on the Black Sea, students at a university considered Left-wing were unable to cross a poor Right-wing neighbourhood outside the campus gates; and a new road was projected to take them through safe territory. In factories, as soon as Right-wing unions signed agreements with employers, Left-wing unions came along tempting workers with more militant demands; sometimes workers would transfer their membership, while at other times their original union would renege on its agreement in order to outbid its rivals. An impotent President of the Republic presided over the drift to disintegration.

TODAY MARXISTS quite naturally object to the provisions in the new Constitution which restrict unions and professional associations to their primary purpose; ban political activities, affiliations and alliances; ban also more than one collective agreement in a given work-place at a given time. The Constitution goes further. Strikes and lock-outs are not to destroy national wealth; unions are to be responsible for damage caused during strikes; political and general strikes, solidarity strikes, occupations and protest actions reducing output are banned; strikes can be deferred and in some cases referred to compulsory arbitration.

What really upset all union leaders was the brief provision that "a member is [himself] to pay his subscription direct to his union." The effect of the change would have been dramatic, but at the last moment the generals decided to placate the unions, and the ban on the check-off was deleted. The unions knew that their income would drop catastrophically the moment the check-off of subscriptions at source was stopped. Indirect forms of pressure will become difficult under the provision that "no one may be forced to become a member, remain a member or resign from membership of a union". The Constitution deals with problems which are not unknown in more developed European countries; and it adopts solutions which are conservative, but not illiberal.

THE CONSTITUTION would have been less controversial if it had confined itself to generalities and left more of the detail, and particularly the limitations and exceptions, to specific legislation: a labour law, a press law, etc. After all, British legislation on official secrets, contempt of court, suppression of terrorism and the rest would not look good in a written constitution, however necessary it may be in practice. The new Turkish Constitution is prolix. Where the 1961 Constitution proclaimed (Article 35) "The family is the foundation of the Turkish nation. The state... takes the necessary measures . . . to protect the family, mothers and children . . .", the new Constitution also remembers family planning. But not all additions are due to fussy attempts at comprehensiveness. A constitutional amendment initially requires a majority of three-quarters, and later of two-thirds of the entire membership of the assembly, while a law can be passed or repealed by a simple majority. The generals have clearly felt safer putting as many of their ideas as possible into the text of the Constitution.

It is when Parliament is elected that the open problems will start. The President, it is true, will have greater powers, but he will be able to exercise the most important of them—the power to order new elections—only on the advice of the outgoing Chairman of the Assembly, and if a new cabinet cannot be formed within 45 days. Otherwise, Parliament will be free to legislate, to approve or reject a government, to impeach Ministers, and, after the first term, to elect the President of the Republic himself. And the new Parliament will be subject to exactly the same pressures as applied to its predecessors. The Turkish electorate—with its eyes on the living standards of Western Europe, its heart torn between utopian scientistic hopes and nostalgia for an Islamic past, and its feet in a middle-ranking developing country—will not be slow to clamour for the immediate satisfaction of its general and sectional demands or to give vent to its internal and external resentments and jealousies. It will claim the personal, political, social and economic rights which the new Constitution has, in theory, augmented, disregarding the provision

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repeated from the old Constitution that "the state shall implement its social and economic duties under the constitution . . . only to the extent to which its financial resources permit." Constitutions are a weak defence against the crises created by popular dissatisfaction, particularly when there are no remedies to it.

EXPLAINING HIS DECISION to dissolve the first Ottoman Parliament in 1878, Sultan Abdul Hamid wrote:

> "Seriously, for faithful supporters of the state and the country, there are two truths, two supreme purposes and duties, which are the pinnacle of their hopes. The first is to attend always to the territorial integrity of the state and to oppose all harmful actions and attempts upon it. The second is to make full use of the country's resources for progress, prosperity and happiness, and thus ensure that the state survives in growing strength and wealth and the people live in happiness, security and order. The Chamber of Deputies must guarantee these two supreme needs. If it does, then it should be summoned and the deputies should convene. If not, its opening is fatal for the state and damaging to the interests of the country . . ."[1]

Today many Turks, and their foreign friends, criticise the new Constitution. Some argue that it cannot be called democratic if it outlaws "Communism", "fascism", and the political expression of religious fundamentalism. Many others see the damage which it will do to their personal prospects. But among the 91% of the electorate who voted for the Constitution there must be many who would agree with Abdul Hamid's view of the matter. In the meantime, they are keeping their fingers crossed.

I was travelling in Spain when on 11 September, the Catalan "national day", a large procession wound its way through the Gothic quarter of Barcelona, shouting "No to LOAPA!" (LOAPA is the Spanish acronym for the Organic Law on the Harmonisation of the Process of Autonomy.)

"What do they object to in LOAPA?" I asked a Catalan journalist.

"Object?", he replied. "They are delighted with it. It's a heaven-sent stick to use against the Socialists, who supported the law and who can now be called traitors to Catalonia. It might lose them a few thousand votes in the general elections." As for LOAPA, no one has bothered to read it."

How many Turks shouting "*No to the Junta's Constitution!*" have bothered to read the new Turkish organic law? If they did, they would find a perfectly orthodox, respectable document; defining the rights of the citizens and the duties of the state; separating powers—legislative, executive, and judiciary—and describing their competence. They would find old and new immunities: a specific prohibition of torture (Article 17) as well as *habeas corpus* and the right to compensation for wrongful arrest (Article 19). They would find modish features: the duty of the state to protect Consumers (Article 172) and the Environment (Article 56). They would see that some of the provisions singled out for criticism have respectable Western precedents. The Turkish President will appoint some judges of the Constitutional Court (like the US President in the case of the Supreme Court). There will be state security courts (as in Giscard's France). There will be decrees having the force of law, subject to subsequent Parliamentary approval (as in most Western European countries). The President was to have appointed the Director-General of Radio & Television. In the past this functionary was in effect appointed by the Prime Minister—and promptly dismissed by his successor. However, General Evren decided that he did not need this particular right, and deleted it from the final draft. The President will, however, appoint the rectors of universities, whose academic freedom the Constitution guarantees.

The clear intention is to place as large a part of public life as possible outside the field of Party politics. It is, admittedly, a conservative intention. To the revolutionary everything is, or should be, the subject of politics; and every right conceded should be usable for the sake of the Cause. The revolutionary had little enough to like in the 1961 Constitution (particularly as amended after 1971). The 1982 Constitution gives him even less comfort. But opposition to it brings also an opportunity—the opportunity of "the broad front." More people are likely to shout "No to the Junta's Constitution!" than "One solution—Revolution!"

So outside observers should be wary. They should not expect the Constitution to change the facts of life and of power in Turkey. But one thing is certain. When, in the middle of the last century, Young Ottoman intellectuals began agitating for constitutional government, they coined a new word for a novel concept. They called it *mesrutiyet*, "conditionality"—because the Constitution would set conditions to the exercise of the Sultan's absolute power. Today, by proposing their new Constitution, Turkish generals have accepted conditions to the exercise of the power which they hold in the country.

[1] Translated from Ibnülemin Mahmud Kemal Inal, *Osmanli Devrinde Son Sadriazamlar* (*Last Grand Viziers of the Ottoman Period*), (Istanbul, 1965), vol. V, pp. 679-80.

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As elsewhere (and particularly in developing countries), the power of the Turkish armed forces derives primarily from their concentrated military might. But there is also a genuine "folk" identification of army and nation, an identification born of the historical experience of the Turks as the frontiersmen of Islam and expressed in the definition of the Turkish nation as "a people in arms." There *is* an ambivalence of feeling. If the army is part of the nation, it is a hard part—it is the nation's super-ego.

In social status and composition, the Turkish armed forces are not unique. The officer corps is a distinct, but not closed institution. Officers have their separate housing and shops, their clubs and investment funds. They tend to come from military families. New recruits to the officer corps come from the lower-middle class (particularly in the provinces), and eventually achieve middle-class status.

Historically, the Turkish army has not been the only power in the land. The military institution has always been balanced by the civil institution, "the men of the sword" by "the men of the pen." The rest of the populace was regarded in Ottoman times as an undifferentiated mass of subjects (or, more accurately, a mass differentiated by religion and trade, but not by political status). The Republic enfranchised this mass first theoretically and then, increasingly, in practice. Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic, proclaimed rhetorically: "The peasant is our master." Legally, all republican constitutions have declared that sovereignty resided in the nation. While popular political participation is a new phenomenon, and became notable only after World War II, individuals were always regarded as possessing rights, which with the Republic became "citizens' rights." Today, therefore, the Turkish armed forces operate not in a vacuum (as in some developing countries), but as a power cognisant of citizens' rights and of the status of a growing number of civil institutions: the civil service, universities, the press, trade unions. They may confront these rights; but they do not deny them.

All this may help to explain why the exercise of the power of the Turkish armed forces cannot really be characterised as wilful. They have intervened three times, and each time it could be argued reasonably that intervention had been preceded by a signal failure of the civil power to discharge its essential duty of government. Nor have these interventions been primarily self-regarding (although they have been followed by some improvement in the material condition of the armed forces and by the advancement of individual retired officers). But the separation of the military and civil institutions, which had its roots in Ottoman times and on which Atatürk had always insisted (and which he symbolised by his refusal to wear a military uniform after his election as President of the Republic), was always maintained. After each coup, the armed forces returned to their barracks, while some members of them retired and entered civil institutions. The same pattern is being followed now.

There have, of course, been politically ambitious military adventurers in the Turkish armed forces. They were prominent among the plotters of the 1960 coup. But they were quickly purged by the generals. Retired Colonel Alpaslan Türkeş who became the leader of the quasi-fascist Nationalist Action Party, was one such plotter. Today he is on trial for his life.

Just as recent Turkish military coups have not aimed at permanent military rule, so too they have not sought utopian settlements. In particular, they have always been hostile to any expression of Islamic fundamentalism. The officer corps has not wavered in its allegiance to Atatürk's secular republic, perhaps because this republican secularism was the consummation of the Ottoman tradition of regarding religion as "the servant" not "the master" of the state. In the eyes of the Turkish officer the main purpose of religion is to preach national unity and strengthen morale on the front line.

Is this to say that Turkish coups have sought to make the country "safe for democracy"? Incidentally, yes; primarily they have sought to make the country safe *tout court*. "It is not easy to maintain our ownership of this land", said General Evren on the eve of the referendum:

> "The vital arteries of three continents, from west to east and from north to south . . . pass through our country. . . . We were the first ones to manage to make this land a country. Those before us failed. We managed, thanks to our national unity and solidarity. In this part of the world, the moment our national solidarity weakens a little, we not only receive wounds, but lose our entire national existence."

"The basic aim and duty of the state", declares the new Constitution, "is to defend the independence and integrity of the Turkish nation, the indivisibility of the country, the republic and democracy, and to ensure the prosperity, tranquillity and happiness of individuals and of society . . . ." One doubts whether General Evren has any intention of either imposing or even teaching democracy. He sees his job as helping to provide and defend an institutional and legal framework within which democracy can function without prejudice to the external security of the state or the security of life and property within it.

*How can they know our labour sore*
*Who pass light-burthened on the shore?*

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asked the Persian poet Hafez (in Professor Arberry's Victorian rendering). What do we know of the frontiersman's concern for safety? Not much, even where our intentions are honourable.

And they have not always been so. When the first Ottoman Constitution was promulgated more than a century ago,

> "the question of whether the Constitution was suited to the Empire and would prove . . . effective in eliminating injustice . . . was of little interest to Europeans. They angrily denounced the Constitution not because they were convinced that it would fail but because they feared it might succeed."[2]

Had the first Constitution succeeded in 1876, Europe would have had no excuse to meddle in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire. The 1982 Constitution poses similar dangers. In the meantime, the decision of 91% of the Turkish electorate to vote for this Constitution (for a variety of reasons) calls for our understanding. And then perhaps a little care and concern for the perceived national interests of our friends the Turks might also help us to a greater understanding of the general purposes of politics and, incidentally, of democracy.

[2] Robert Devereux, *The First Ottoman Constitutional Period* (John Hopkins, 1963), p. 90.

# Timerman's War

## *Some Critical Notes—By* CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN

JACOBO TIMERMAN is best known in the English-speaking world for the book *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number* (1981) in which he tells of his experiences as an untried prisoner of an Argentinian Junta.[1] Mr Timerman is a notable writer, and *Prisoner Without a Name* is a modern prison classic, in the line of Dostoevsky's *House of the Dead.*

Mr Timerman was an Argentinian Jew; his Jewishness was relevant to his grim experiences, because the Argentine Right and its brutal servants are strongly anti-Semitic. After his release from his clandestine prison, Mr Timerman went to Israel and became an Israeli. He has now been living in Israel for three years; his eldest son, Daniel, was called up for service in the Israel Defence Forces in Lebanon early last June.

The present book[2] is, in the main, an impassioned protest against the fact and course of Israel's war in Lebanon, and against Mr Menachem Begin's Government, and especially its Minister for Defence, General Ariel Sharon. I say "in the main", because Mr Timerman also offers some quite strong criticism of some modes of condemning Israel, and of supporting the Palestinians. Thus he writes:

> "When certain critics accuse us of being Nazis, they do General Sharon a service. Truly, we are not Nazis, so the accusation serves Sharon by permitting him to discredit the accusers and to reclaim his innocence, yet we are not innocent."

And again:

> "To speak of a Palestinian genocide, of a Palestinian Holocaust, to compare Beirut with Stalingrad or with the Warsaw Ghetto will move no one. Jews know what genocide is, and a Holocaust, and a Nazi. We don't need—nobody needs—to resort to truculent comparisons to arouse desperate feelings about the victims of

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN, *Irish historian, literary critic, diplomat, and politician, is the author of a book on Camus (1968), and of works on the history of Ireland and on the United Nations, where he served under Dag Hammarskjøld. From 1962–65 he was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana. He was a member of the Irish Parliament and then a Senator from 1969–79, serving for four years as a Minister in the Labour Cabinet of Liam Cosgrave. He was until recently Editor-in-Chief of "The Observer" in London, for which he still writes a regular weekly column. His article on "Liberty & Terror" appeared in the October 1977* ENCOUNTER.

[1] See, in ENCOUNTER (November 1981), James Neilson, "The Education of Jacobo Timerman."

[2] *The Longest War.* By JACOBO TIMERMAN. Chatto & Windus, £7.95, paper £2.50.

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Lebanon, the innocent deaths brought about by the Begin government."

He offers a devastating indictment of the PLO's sympathisers and the effects of their sympathy:

"All those who approached the Palestinians betrayed them. The democratic political leaders of Western Europe betrayed them when they induced the P.L.O. to feel that it and they formed part of the same institutional constellation, without warning the P.L.O. that the idea of a secular Palestinian state in which Jews would be a minority was simply the product of a dream, that history does not go back to such a point. When the Western Europeans heard the P.L.O. talk of a 'Zionist entity', they did not respond with an explanation of the meaning and power of Israel. They did not warn the P.L.O. against dreaming of the liquidation of a state whose power these politicians knew only too well. They allowed the P.L.O. to avoid the issue with ambivalent insinuations that not even the good will with which some of us in Israel heard them could convince us that the P.L.O. would accept anything less than the destruction of our country."

Further:

"Each 'political' triumph of the P.L.O. that was marked by the establishment of a delegation in a Western country was actually one more push toward the abyss into which it fell. Each P.L.O. diplomatic triumph in the United Nations was one more way of alienating the Palestinians from reality. The expression of 'solidarity' by dozens of Third World countries actually, in its simplicity, raised a new ring of solitude around the Palestinians. The Third World cannot help them. It can't help itself. It doesn't even exist. But the Palestinians were given top billing in the rhetoric that makes people believe in the Third World power."

But the main thrust of his argument is directed against the present Government of Israel, its war in Lebanon, and its policy for the West Bank ("Judaea and Samaria").

MR TIMERMAN FINDS that there was absolutely no justification for Israel's intervention in Lebanon, since the PLO is not a serious military force, and it and its armaments constituted no serious threat to Israel, which is by far the strongest military force in the region, and one of the strongest in the world. The campaign was conducted ruthlessly, and with little regard for civilian lives, Palestinian or Lebanese. It culminated in the disaster of the letting loose, by order of General Sharon (as now admitted), of the Christian militia which perpetrated the frightful massacre of Palestinians at the Sabra and Chatila camps. Israel is emerging as "the Prussia of the Middle East", encircling its neighbours, rather than being encircled by them, yet without achieving anything to its lasting advantage:

"Everything was singing victory. And now, after all these weeks, what remains? Certainly not new opportunities in the region. We are barely participating in the diplomatic moves, and our ally has not changed its relationship with the Arab world. America is striving to strengthen the same countries as it did before the war and is also seeking new alliances, and its leaders know that in both pursuits what they achieve will depend more on their attitude toward the Palestinian issue, toward the Palestinian people, than on all the military might that Israel can deploy. The new diplomatic and strategic opportunities are for the Egyptians and the French. Without breaking relations with Israel, Egypt has returned to the Arab world, though we were led to believe that we had achieved a division among the Arabs. And France, led by its Socialist president, had begun once again to play a diplomatic role in the Levant, though we were led to believe that the European Left would never again play a role in the Middle East, because it was so engrossed with the Third World that it could not bother with the preservation of Israel."

Most readers will find *The Longest War* an extremely moving document. It is certainly an eloquent personal testimony, and a contribution of lasting significance to the great debate of Israel. But it is also, in some important ways, a highly misleading document. Let me try to show why I believe this to be the case.

FIRST OF ALL, the grounds for intervention by Israel in Lebanon were not so frivolous as Mr Timerman suggests. Lebanon had been plunged for the past seven years into a state of anarchy, in which the most powerful elements—the Syrian "Arab Deterrent Force" and the PLO—regarded themselves as being at war with Israel: a war which, in recent times, they have found it expedient to suspend, through a cease-fire. The PLO maintained on Israel's northern border a huge armament, whose *raison d'être* was the achievement of the objectives of the Palestinian National Covenant: objectives which assume the liquidation of the state of Israel. It is quite true, as Mr Timerman argues, and as indeed has been proved to be the case, that the PLO forces were utterly incapable, militarily speaking, of achieving those objectives. In military terms, those forces were only effective in so far as they enabled the PLO to

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overawe the Lebanese, and to dominate a part of Lebanon. But in political and symbolic terms, these forces cast a long shadow to the south. They constituted a question-mark over the existence of the state of Israel.

Experienced observers knew that the PLO was incapable of liberating Palestine and liquidating Israel. But many young Arabs did not know this. Arabs in the West Bank, in Gaza, in East Jerusalem, in Israel itself, in Jordan. To them, those armed forces only a few miles away, whose guns could be heard every now and then, meant that liberation, and the end of Israel, were on the way. In these conditions defiance of Israel *à outrance* was appropriate, and any form of negotiation with Israel treachery, punishable by death. The PLO political agents, and their executioners, were the advance guard of the liberating army, poised just across the border.

Mr Timerman writes very well about the dangerous illusions of the Palestinians. But he does not acknowledge that the main focus of these illusions was the PLO armed force in Lebanon. These illusions were dangerous, not only to the Palestinians themselves, but to Israel, both in a general political sense, and through the encouragement given to terrorism. Was it, then, altogether irrational and absurdly arrogant (as Mr Timerman suggests) for the Government of Israel to decide to prick the bubble: to demonstrate the military futility of those forces—in the only way that could be done—and to get rid of the hostile forces from the neighbouring land? I believe that any other government, facing a situation at all closely analogous to what Israel faced on its Northern border, would have taken the same basic decision, at an appropriate time.

Mr Timerman argues, in effect, that Israel is not "any other government", and that higher ethical standards are expected from it. It is an impressive argument, in the mouth of an Israeli, and it is extremely impressive that so many Israelis have voiced it and shown they mean it. But I don't think that a foreign and gentile commentator, like myself, has any particular right to endorse that argument. We have no right to demand higher ethical standards from others than from ourselves.

MR TIMERMAN TAKES, as we have seen, the view that the new situation created by the eviction of the PLO from Lebanon does not create "any new opportunities in the region." This is an eccentric opinion, and the reasons Mr Timerman gives in support of it have a superficial and random look.

The fact is that the eviction of the PLO from Lebanon has dramatically altered the whole political ecology of the region. The calling of the PLO's military bluff shifts the balance inside the PLO itself, and obviously to the disadvantage of the militarists. Among the Arab states, the balance tilts in favour of the (relatively) moderate States, and against the "confrontationists", whose bluster is discredited by their recent total inactivity. Egypt's peace with Israel has become less easy to denounce, since the denouncers—with the largely involuntary exception of Syria—did no more to defend the Palestinians than Egypt did. Yasser Arafat meets with King Hussein. A Gemayel is received in Riyadh. An American set of proposals—which actually exclude a Palestinian state—is gratefully received by the representatives of Arab states assembled at Fez. Unmistakably, the Arabs are much more inclined than they were, before the expulsion of the PLO, to reflect that half a loaf is better than no bread at all.

NOW THIS DISPOSITION on the part of the Arabs does create a new and wonderful opportunity—for those who want such an opportunity. It is an opportunity to negotiate a settlement for the West Bank, with Israel surrendering some occupied territory, in exchange for recognised and secure frontiers and peace, at last with all her neighbours: the serene panorama contemplated in Security Council Resolution 242, and in President Reagan's recent proposals.

The tragic paradox is that those who did most to create that opportunity—Mr Begin's Government—are those least likely to make any use of it. For Mr Begin, indeed, an Arab inclination to negotiate seriously about the West Bank does not constitute an opportunity: it constitutes a problem. Mr Begin has no intention of negotiating about the West Bank, except in terms of the cosmetics of occupation. Mr Begin is indeed capable of statesmanship, and the courage of statesmanship: he showed that over the evacuation of Sinai (and the eviction of Jewish settlers) and he had shown it before, in 1948, at the time of the foundation of the State of Israel, when he did more than any man to avert civil war among Israelis. But Mr Begin is not about to be statesmanlike over the West Bank. For him, as for his mentor, Vladimir Jabotinsky, that territory is Judaea and Samaria, sacred soil, never to be abandoned. As long as Mr Begin holds power, Israel will not give up an inch of the West Bank.

So the opportunity created will not now be taken. But the opportunity is likely to outlast Mr Begin. I share Mr Timerman's hope that a future Government of Israel will aim at serious negotiations, in the spirit of Resolution 242, with the Arabs. But I think it should be recognised that the task of such a future Government will be greatly eased by the fact that it will not have to negotiate in the shadow of a PLO armed presence on its border—and of widespread Arab illusions that a

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military alternative is available to them, if Israel fails to meet their terms.

*Saeva indignatio* is a good aid to literary creation, but it can distort reality, in a creative and indignant sort of way. Mr Timerman's indignation is primarily directed at Mr Begin and General Sharon—partly appropriate in the first case, and entirely so in the second—but his indignation tends to spill over, as this bubbly substance will, on to other objects. Mr Timerman's references to the "Sephardic Israelis"—the community from which Mr Begin draws his main support—are brief and unsympathetic. There are just two of these references. The first is in the context of a mass demonstration in Tel Aviv against the war in Lebanon:

> "Someone remarked that almost all of us there were Ashkenazim, from Europe and the West. I'm not impressed by the observation, nor do I feel guilty because the poorest sector of the Jewish population—the Sephardim, who are native to the Middle East—is against us and chants worshipfully, 'Begin, King of Israel.' I have seen their counterparts in Argentina solidly behind Peron."

That's all, in that bit. The Sephardic Jews—originating mainly from Arab countries—are now about half the population, and play an increasingly important part in shaping its destiny. To write them off simply as "counterparts" to people in a very different situation, in a very different country, is far from illuminating.

The other reference to the Sephardics is even briefer. Among a number of undesirable things which, in Mr Timerman's opinion, cannot be halted if we don't take to heart the true character of the Palestinian problem, is the following:

> ". . . the artificial promotion of confrontation between Ashkenazi and Sephardic Israelis. . . ."

The context clearly implies that the confrontation has been artificially promoted by Mr Begin and his friends. But in fact the confrontation—to the limited but real extent to which it exists—is inherent in the situation, and there is nothing artificial about it. Israelis of European origin feel, in varying degrees, some guilt about the Palestinians. Israelis of Asian and African origin have, in general, no such feelings. They are proud when they see their country's leader "standing up to the Arabs"—as they and their ancestors were unable to do, over so many generations, in the lands from which they came. The state of their feelings is unfortunate, and dangerous both for Israel and the Arabs, but it is entirely natural. And the notion of Mr Begin as a promoter of confrontation between the two Israeli communities is really a bit odd, since he is the one Ashkenazi politician who is loved by the Sephardics of Israel.

TOWARDS THE END of his book, Mr Timerman's indignation spills over against Israeli democracy itself. Writing of the investigations into the massacres of Palestinians, he remarks:

> "I have little faith in Israeli's democratic opposition. I fear that Israeli discipline that totally dominates the subconscious of all of us will produce an investigation that, in effect, will protect any criminals from the punishment they deserve, and that the Israeli people will suffer an overwhelming loss of respect and moral understanding in the eyes of the world."

By the time those words appeared in print (*The New Yorker*, 25 October), it was already clear that he should have had more faith, and that his fear was exaggerated. Mr Begin, indeed, would have liked to get away with the kind of investigation Mr Timerman postulates, but Israel's democratic opposition and—especially—Israeli's free press would not let him. The press of Israel, almost without exception, was unsparing in its exposure of the details of what happened at Sabra and Chatila, and in its demolition of the Government's attempted cover-up. The press exposure, and the manifestations of public outrage which accompanied it, forced Mr Begin to concede a genuine investigation, which is still in progress as I write this. There's nothing "protective" about its proceedings, any more than there was anything protective about the Israeli press coverage of the events in question.

General Sharon in particular has rightly taken a fearful hammering in the course of these proceedings. A recent poll shows that the Israelis who would favour him as a future Prime Minister—never a very numerous body—now number one half of one per cent. The General must wish that the discipline which totally dominates the "subconscious" of Israelis would manifest its presence a little more definitely.

THERE HAS BEEN no war in modern times—and probably no war ever—in which so much public opinion in a given country has reacted so promptly against its own country's war effort. I lived in France during the war in Algeria, and in America during part of the war in Viet Nam. In both cases, it took years and much discouraging news, before protest really took off. In the case of the Lebanon war, it took off within weeks, and amid total victory for the army of Israel. It seems to me that the French and the Americans—and I would add the British and the Irish—have more of that protective subconscious discipline than Israelis have demonstrated in this case.

Mr Timerman's indignation rather often clouds his judgment; there are occasions when it also clouds his perception. This is most markedly the

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case in the section of his book which deals with Lebanon. He has got it into his head that the Lebanese hate and fear the Israeli occupying forces, and when the Lebanese tell him different, he knows better than to believe them. Here he goes (talking about Tyre):

> "Those of us who have been in prison know how to speak with our eyes so that we can be understood when we are forced to talk in the presence of the guards. Consequently, I know what a cordial and pleasant Lebanese is saying is contradicted by what is expressed in his eyes. His English is clumsy, his phrases are stereotyped. Whoever has been a prisoner or been forced to surrender knows how degrading a moment like this can be. I understand the serene dignity of his gaze, and I recognise his proud personality. So I tell him what one prisoner tells another when they share oppressive circumstances: I wish him luck, lots of luck, and I ask him to have faith, lots of faith. I say this in a few French words—a signal of respect for his cultural tradition—and I hope that he understands I'm paying homage to his identity. Of course, I wish that I could say much more, but we prisoners know that it is dangerous to compromise anyone who remains in custody. We know, too, that even listening can be dangerous. So I bow my head a little when I shake his hand: 'Adieu, mon cher monsieur'. I wish to ask his forgiveness."

Now it so happens that I was in Lebanon including Tyre at the same time as Mr Timerman—the second week of July—and my impressions were quite different. So were the impressions of all the foreign correspondents with whom I compared notes. We all felt that the people who said *Shalom!* said *Shalom!* because *Shalom!* was what they felt like saying. We felt that the people who were "cordial and pleasant" to the Israelis were that way because that was how they felt. We formed the belief that most Lebanese—obviously there are exceptions—thought of the Israelis, not as occupying invaders, but as their liberators from the PLO. They didn't feel that they had been "subdued by force" by the Israelis; they felt the *Palestinians* had been subdued by force, thus relieving the Lebanese of an oppressive burden, if at a high cost. The invasion of Lebanon is unique among invasions in that it was strongly resented and condemned by people in other countries—who read about it and saw some of its incidents on television—but not by most of the people of the country invaded.

I know that some, perhaps many, of my readers, will find the above statement incredible, and some of you may feel it to be perhaps motivated by a desire to whitewash evil deeds. Not so. But let me be clear about my sources.

The first source, though by no means the only one, was a series of personal interviews with Lebanese, at the very time about which Mr Timerman is writing here. Like Mr Timerman, I went in to Southern Lebanon with an Israeli escort. Mr Timerman says that his escort wouldn't let him walk around alone in Tyre, telling him it was too dangerous. He implies that this was a pretence, and that the real reason was desire of the Israelis to prevent him from finding out what the Lebanese really thought. On my own visit to Tyre, I didn't ask to walk around, because I thought myself it was too dangerous: the damage being extensive and recent, with possibilities of unexploded devices and other unpleasantness. But in other centres in Southern Lebanon, where the damage had been less great and life had got more or less back to normal, I did tell my escort I wanted to walk around on my own, and they raised no objection. Thus, I talked without any Israelis present to Lebanese in the small town of Hatzveya, which is Druse, and in the small town of Nabatiyya which is mainly Shi'i Muslim, like most of the population of Southern Lebanon, including Tyre and Sidon. (I knew a little about the local background because I had spent a month in Lebanon the previous September, mainly in the South.) I looked for people speaking either French or English, and I found quite a few. I have recorded some of these conversations in detail in *The Observer* but I shall just put down the bare gist of them here.

EVERYBODY WAS GLAD the Israelis had got rid of the Palestinians. The damage and loss of life incurred in the process seemed to be accepted as unavoidable (most people did not refer to these at all). Nobody made any complaints about the Israelis, but nobody wanted them to stay in Lebanon. They wanted them to leave, but not before they had made quite sure the Palestinians would never come back. And it is not just a matter of my personal impression as against Mr Timerman's. The other visiting foreign correspondents I mentioned, who had had their separate opportunities of talking with Lebanese in the absence of Israelis had exactly the same general impression as my own.

The rather startling fact that most Lebanese—including Muslims and Druses as well as Christians—are glad that Israel invaded Lebanon is one that has hardly got through to the public in the West. The correspondents resident in the region have indeed acknowledged the existence of this phenomenon, but they have generally done so unobtrusively by way of asides, which tend to get lost in a mass of more dramatic, and more readily assimilable, material. But there is one authority in the region who has recently explored the topic

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more explicitly than is customary. I shall introduce this authority now because I feel that, without him, some readers may be more likely to prefer the Timerman version.

Mr Patrick Seale is Middle East correspondent of *The Observer*. He speaks Arabic, so he is not reduced like myself (and I think Mr Timerman) to looking for Lebanese who speak English or French. He is a highly respected specialist on the region. Also he is trusted in the Arab world, and regarded with a corresponding reserve in Israeli official circles. Here is what he has to say, writing in the aftermath of Israel's withdrawal from Beirut (*Observer*, 24 October):

> "Beirut's euphoria at the return of peace has not abated. The clearing away of the barricades dividing the city, the presence everywhere of government and multinational forces, and particularly the disappearance from the streets of armed irregulars have all bred a new and heady sense of security.
>
> In everyone's mind, but not often voiced is the knowledge that but for Israel's invasion, the expulsion of the Palestinian guerrillas and the last push into West Beirut with its terrible overspill of massacres, the Lebanese would not now be enjoying the passing of their long nightmare.
>
> Israel did the 'dirty work' for them, but in the thankless manner of human beings, few Lebanese want the Israelis to reap the political prize of a Lebanon under Israeli influence."

Lebanon will not be under Israeli influence. But it will be free from the PLO because the Lebanese want it that way, and Israel has made it possible for them to have what they want.

HAVING FOUND *The Longest War* defective in some important ways, both in analysis and in description, I should like to end by praising it as literature. I can't do so unreservedly, because one's judgment of the writing, in the case of such a document as this, depends to a large extent on one's judgment of the situations written about. Thus, if you can believe Mr Timerman's interpretation of what he saw and heard in Tyre, you are likely to be impressed by the passage quoted, beginning "Those of us who have been in prison . . ." and ending "I don't fraternise with those I have subdued by force."

Perhaps one should still be impressed and moved by the passage, as literature, even if you know, as I do, that it is all stuff and nonsense. Personally, I cannot manage such a feat of aesthetic detachment. I find the passage faintly nauseating, an insensitive display of sensibility. That is Mr Timerman at his worst, which he hits more often than I would wish. But he is never less than brilliant, even at his worst. He has frequent short sharp bursts of shrewd insight—some of which I quoted near the beginning. His testimony is of high importance, even if much of it must be contested. His book will be quoted by historians of Israel for many years to come, whenever they consider the fateful summer of 1982. One should read the book; many will love it, and hate this review. I don't ask readers not to love it, but I do suggest that they would be wise not to assume that it is invariably reliable.

## A Scottish Psychiatrist considers *La Bohème*

Of course, this opera is pre-Freud;
in 1896, when it was first produced
and Mimi first offered herself to be seduced,
Freud's main work was *Studies on Hysteria*
(1893). In collaboration with Breuer.
Would Giacosa and Illica have made Mimi coyer

if they'd ever read it? I think not.
Mimi, you remember, says she's lost *the key to her room.*
She looks for it *in the dark, with a man*—we assume
she deserves guid Scots words of trust and praise—
as one might say, a "douce wee body."
But she's not so douce—or as innocent as Noddy!

Later she tells Rodolfo the losing was sham.
She's a sly puss, a schemer, and that's
interesting; *Mimi* is what the French call pussycats.
(For us there's significance in a word like pussy).
In those days Freud was only feeling his way—
but so was Mimi, we could, without contradiction, say.

*Gavin Ewart*

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# Struggling Westward

## *America & the Coming of Modernism (I)*

### *By* MALCOLM BRADBURY

IF WE ARE TO BELIEVE Gertrude Stein, modernism and America were always made for each other. England, she explained in *Paris, France* (1940), consciously chose to refuse the 20th century, "knowing full well that they had gloriously created the nineteenth century and perhaps the twentieth century was going to be too many for them", while the French simply accepted its arrival unflinchingly, since "what is was and what was is, was their point of view of which they were not very conscious." This left the 20th century to the attention of Americans, and particularly, of course, to Miss Stein. Paris, admittedly, appeared to be the centre of modernism, which was what she found there in the art-movements that swept through that capital after her own arrival and residence there in 1903. But really it was, she said, the achievement of Spaniards and Americans. And in any case modernism was natural to America, as it was not to France. Cubism, she explained, started in France but went to America to happen, because it fitted in with the American space-time continuum and the American sense of landscape and urban construction. Futurism in literature went with the futurism of American life. And indeed one reason why the image of the modern United States, with its skyscraper cities, cars, bustle and speed, appealed to so many European modernists, from Picasso to Mayakovsky, was that they too saw it as cubism or futurism in action.

Yet the fact was that modernism was a European movement, not of enormous initial appeal to Americans. The dominant literary movement in the United States, over the period when Picasso painted *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* and Gertrude Stein sat under the Cezanne portrait to write *Three Lives*, was naturalism. But this did not invalidate the prophecy, which Miss Stein supported throughout her life; and in the end she was, as in other things, to prove remarkably right. By the 1920s, as Scott Fitzgerald said, "something subtle passed to America, the style of man", and what was true of life-style was proving true of art-style as well. And by the 1930s, if not before, many of the European modernists, from Brecht to Stravinsky, and many of the European modernisms, from Bauhaus to psychoanalysis, were making their way across the Atlantic, often under the pressure of European resistance or political persecution, and finding there an environment that had already domesticated their radical originality. Indeed the United States was already building a modernist cityscape into which they readily fitted; as Tom Wolfe has lately shown, in *From Bauhaus to Our House*, the most radical and experimental architects of the new cities of Europe found their readiest patrons in the world of American corporate-capitalist commercialism.

For this receptivity, we can offer various explanations. D. H. Lawrence, for example, saw a deep disposition to avant-gardism rooted in 19th-century American life and culture. "Two bodies of modern literature seem to me to have come to the real verge: the Russian and the American. . . ." he noted in *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923). "The furthest frenzies of French modernism or futurism have not yet reached the pitch of extreme consciousness that Poe, Melville, Hawthorne, Whitman reached. The Europeans were all *trying* to be extreme. The great Americans I mention just were it. Which is why the world has funked them, and funks them today." It was not a new view. Melville had seen the entire American people as an avant-garde, moving on through the wilderness of untried things; Whitman had sought to forge a direct alliance between the American democratic self and the mass and the modern experiment of poetry. This was the alliance that, in their pacts with Whitman, Ezra Pound and Hart Crane sought to reforge; and it was what many an American, from Henry Adams on, saw as the great challenge and opportunity of the 20th century, which, as Senator Beveridge said as the century turned, was to be American.

Yet most of the modernist movements *were* forged in Europe—even if on occasion, as with



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London Imagism, there was a significant or even dominant American constituent. And it took some time before the modernist mood and the avant-garde spirit seemed to be in any real concord with the American way—for was not the American way that of progressivism and naturalism? What I want to follow here are some of the connections that exist between two basic evolutions, one of them in art and the other in the world: the evolution of modernism, and the development of modernisation. It is not an easy equation: world and word, real cities and imaginary ones, are always hard to relate. And they were never more difficult to put in relation than in the period of modernism, the period of those arts of form, impression and consciousness which sought exactly to break with mimesis, direct referentiality, clear ideological identification between audience and artist; the period when the very notion of significant relationship between history and creative activity evolved into a species of mystery. We know these as essential times of change, those years between 1890 and 1930 when we might centre modernism. But we also know that it was an artistic principle of this time of change that one way in which the arts respond to it is by creating new languages and forms, which correspond only obliquely to prevailing structures of consciousness, agreed dispositions of the relationship between subject and object, word and thing, ego and world. That dislocated relationship was expressed in the historical relocation of the artist, into the mysterious social space we describe as avant-garde. And it is well, before we go on, to begin the matter with some thoughts on that elusive term.

ONE CHARACTERISTIC of modernism is surely that, intruded between world and art, history and canvas or text, there is an active and reflexive consciousness: that of the artist. That foregrounded artist insists on the elusiveness of his role, his unfixed social location, his function as expression not of a time, an ideology or a constituency but as a radical pioneer of experience. The art he produces thus manifests his discreteness, his distinctiveness, his withdrawal, and its specific appeal is to a state of affairs that does not yet exist, but might do so, and to an audience yet to come. It is his business to redispose his form, his language or his paint in order to reform it, privatise it, make it transhistorical. Yet in his historical dislocation there is a theory of history, in which the artist functions as a prophet of the future, a future which might in the end be expected to guarantee his art and perception, recognise his consciousness, grant that he is indeed avant-garde.

But that term contains its paradoxes. As Renato Poggioli reminds us, in his book *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, it is a borrowed analogy—starting in military life, where we can understand it, moving into political life, where it makes a certain sense too, in terms of a revolutionary historiography, and then into art and literature. Here it grows more obscure, speaking, certainly, to the sense of art as prophecy, to the Shelleyan perception of the artist as "unacknowledged legislator" and hierophant of the future, and to the notion of the artist as experimental researcher. The progress of the metaphor suggests a kinship between art and politics, and hence that the artist is a form of the political radical, an intellectual agent or alienated figure in alliance with the next ideological order of things. But if the term suggests the politicisation of the arts, it also suggests their depoliticisation, and their independence from *all* ideological orders. If it suggests activism, it is also associated—especially after the disillusionments of 1848—with disenchantment with historical evolution, and a will to decadence and aesthetic withdrawal. If it implies the exposure of art to historicism, that fundamental modern desire to tell, as Karl Mannheim put it, by the clock of history what the time is, its spirit is often anti-historical and transcendent. And, if it presents the condition of the artist as alien, exile and *émigré*, then frequently it relishes that condition as a *desirable* state of culture, allowing art that intensity of specialisation, that enclaved existence, in which it is most fully refined.

Indeed it is specialisation and separation that are perhaps the most notable attributes of the avant-garde—with its distinct marginal geography, its special capitals, its transnational bohemian landscape. The obtuse public remains domiciled in ordinary history, in culture's domain and society's process; meanwhile the artist stands in a location beyond those determinants. He is the pioneer of consciousness, the forger of Joyce's "uncreated conscience of my race", or, said Pound, "the antennae of the race." He seeks to transfigure time with art, yet he remains urgent with time and replete with a sense of the modern. Historyless, the idea of history is necessary to the avant-garde, for in it something to come is sensed or prefigured. And the way in which it asserts historical function is in the form of a *style*, or a set of styles, in the creation of a not yet fully revealed potential artistic grammar for the age. Style is thus conceived as a foregrounded element, and it is a gesture of aesthetic but also of historical consciousness. Thus the avant-garde itself is not a style: rather it is a milieu and social location for the generation, reception, sifting and protection of radical styles, a form of artistic organisation in which art may be transformed, and within which potential styles may be evolved, invigilated, perhaps discarded.

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TODAY WE SPEAK of the style of "modernism", but modernism is *our* term, to designate a phase of avant-garde styles, largely created in avant-garde enclaves, often expatriate, in which, characteristically, many movements and tendencies coexisted and often conflicted one with another. Between 1890 and 1930 there was indeed a great clustering of movements: "Post-Impressionism", "Fauvisme", "Cubism", "Expressionism", "Constructivism", "Acmeism", "Imagism", "Futurism", "Dadaism", "Surrealism", and many another. They occur in different cities at different times, have different politics and ideologies, and they propose many very different versions of the avant-garde gamble—offering versions of the form, structure and aesthetic of the modern, while disagreeing violently about what the modern *was*. It is we, since, who have ironed out that contention and found an overarching definition of the generalised battle, speaking of "modernism." Moreover, we have also seemed to validate the entire tendency, and come to see it as a basic and fundamental direction of 20th-century art, regarding it as the founding art for our times and as a total collective prophecy which, in speaking for the nature of the arts in our century, has indeed paid off. Thus the curious sad fate of the avant-garde is fulfilled; reacting against history, it is located in history, the art of outrage has ceased to outrage, and the style of the future is the style of the past.

It is thus the avant-garde that we have validated, in its daring prophecy, and it is interesting to consider how that prophecy succeeded so well. And this brings back the question of the American contribution. For the Americans did *not* invent the avant-garde, which was a largely European phenomenon, in fact dependent on European nationalism and the super-cosmopolitanism that could be set above and against it. No single nation invented modernism; it was an art of polyglot enclaves in many cities, and it moved freely from place to place. In fact it was a revolt against nationality as the prime cause of art, and was as international in its process as the historical processes with which it coincided: modernisation, urbanisation, secularisation, technologisation. Certainly, it drew on national funds, and existed in relation to national artistic traditions—which is one reason why the movements of modernism in different countries take different courses. None the less, national explanations will never suffice us; any adequate account of modernism needs to be polyglot and comparative. But national factors do come into it, and one of the factors we need, in order to explain its success and continuance, is the American dimension.

For there can be no doubt that in modernism there *was* a westering motion, and that during the course of the century the centre of its events seem very steadily to have moved across the Atlantic. Thus if, at the beginning of our period, in the 1890s, we were to try to draw a geographical map of modernism, then we would surely place the centre in Europe, and in a selected number of capitals—Paris and London, Berlin and Munich, Vienna, Prague, Rome and Milan—which acted as primary clearing-houses. There would be outer stations of great interest—Moscow and St Petersburg, New York and Oslo—but we would not see them as points of primary activity; which is why, of course, many artists from those places felt themselves drawn, like Stein and Pound, to the European capitals for advanced news in the arts. And so American writers in the 1890s, that bohemianising decade, were considerably on the fringes, catching up, we might say, with naturalism just at the point where in Europe the tendency was showing signs of exhausting itself, and giving way to decadence, Impressionism, and aestheticism. It was not until around 1912 or 1913 that these new tendencies began to make their full and powerful impact in the United States.

However, by the end of our period, by the end of the 1920s, one would need to draw the map very differently. European centres would remain important, especially Paris, Pound's "laboratory of ideas"; but the balance of power would have changed. The dominance of American activists would now seem vastly greater; moreover, as after the War America had become a creditor rather than debtor nation, so the same sort of thing would have seemed to be present in cultural affairs. By the 1930s, as the *émigrés* went west, the consequences were evident; and by the post-War period the modern experiment had its most striking and dominant outcome in the United States.

It is the stages in this fascinating process I now want to follow, and behind my views you will sense two kinds of explanation of events. My assumption is that the avant-garde is both an aesthetic and a social phenomenon, that art-styles arise in conditioning historical circumstances, and are approved within them, that the story of the modern arts as we now begin to possess it is both an artistic and a social story. So, if we try to

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explain how, in the United States between 1890 and 1930, a fundamental change of forms occurred, on such a scale and in such a manner that we cannot fail to take account of it, and of the American contribution to it, then we will need to bring two accounts together. One comes from an internationalist standpoint, a comparative view that recognises that styles and grammars of art do not stay within specified national boundaries but are part of a general moving western history of forms. The other recognises that the response to modernism in the United States does come from deep changes taking place in American society and culture, as the nation shifted radically from being a land of yeoman farmers and frontier individualists to a land of trusts and corporations, great cities, advanced technological systems, generating deep changes of consciousness. And to comment on this I want, for the purposes of economy, to suggest an impressionistic distinction among four stages of modernism—four stages which, I hope, convey a rhythmic development of moods, movements and aesthetic assumptions, shifting over crisis times, four stages which coincide with a deep change in society and the arts in the United States.

*Modernism I* belongs roughly to the 1890s, where we normally now start any quest for modernism, in the time when a 19th-century western synthesis visibly seems to dissolve or come to crisis, when positivism struggles with intuitionalism, sociology with psychology, naturalism with aestheticism, when world-views pluralise, dusks and dawns in consciousness are much thought of, and ideas are in ferment, generating a phase of outstanding intellectual innovation in science, philosophy, politics, music, painting, and literature. In the arts the primary dialectic is between naturalism and impressionism or aestheticism: the exemplary figures might be said to be Zola but also Mallarmé, Ibsen but also Strindberg. The age's mottos could be said to be both *che sarà, sarà* and Wilde's *Art never expresses anything but itself.*

*Modernism II* falls roughly between the century's turn and around 1910 or 1912, a period when there is an attempt to recreate the liberal-progressive impulse, an impulse voiced in Europe by figures such as Shaw and Wells, in America by Upton Sinclair and Jack London. But this impulse is deeply disturbed by the growth of anti-representational theories, manifest in the rise of Post-Impressionism and Cubism, the art of late James, of early Joyce, of Conrad and Gertrude Stein.

*Modernism III* is the period when the tendencies that have been evolving form into a great blocking-out of movements, a notable burst of magazines and manifestos, a vigorous assertion of the


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stylistic obligations of the modern. It is what Ford Madox Hueffer in London calls "the opening world", and Mabel Dodge Luhan in America identifies as the time of "movers and shakers." The tendencies now amass through Europe, in dispute and contention, simultaneously exciting and threatening, offering their blasts and explosions on the edge of blasts still greater. A new generation of experimental figures arises, in London, in Paris, and in the United States after the little magazine explosion of 1912-1913. It was a period foreshortened in England and Europe by the war, which, said Wyndham Lewis, closed down an age of gigantic figures, but was more extended in America.

*Modernism IV* is the replay with variation of the 1920s, when the war itself seems to have validated the deepest and bleakest insights of modernism. Now it is not only the word but the world that seems disjunct; politics weakens, despair intensifies, apocalypticism and Spenglerian fears grow, decadence returns. It is, especially but not only in the English-language line of modernism, a period of major texts—*The Waste Land*, the early *Cantos*, *Ulysses*, *Mrs Dalloway*, *A la recherche du temps perdu*, *The Making of Americans*, *Manhattan Transfer*, *The Sun Also Rises*, *The Great Gatsby*, *The Sound and The Fury*, *Harmonium*, *The Bridge*. The novel becomes increasingly dominant, and the failed poetic epic. And, as that list suggests, the American contribution now massively enlarges, in a period of new experimentalism that grows up in reaction to the America of Harding, Coolidge, and "the business of America is business." In America the motto of this age is *How are you going to keep em down on the farm after they've seen Paree*, for it is also a season of massive expatriation. But, by the end of the decade, the exiles return, the *émigrés* follow, and the modes of modernism meet American modernity. It is a crude map, but in my next article I want to examine it in more detail—by way of visits to three exhibitions that suggest the complex American response to modernism.

# Modern Languages

## *Recent Poetry—By JOHN MOLE*

A FEW MONTHS AGO, James Fenton gave an interview to *Poetry Review*[1] in which he considered, among other things, some ways "towards finding, in non-poetic language, what can be the poetic language of the future." As I read this, I found myself recalling Yeats's celebrated, idiosyncratic radio broadcast on Modern Poetry—"In my youth I heard much of the music of the future"—and his lofty bewilderment when confronted by what he saw as the non-poetic modernity of T. S. Eliot, whose unromantic, impersonal intitials one can still hear him spitting out in the BBC archives:

> "No romantic word or sound, nothing reminiscent, nothing in the least like the paintings of Ricketts could be permitted henceforth. Poetry must resemble prose, and both must accept the vocabulary of their time; nor must there be any special subject matter. Tristram and Isoult were not a more suitable theme than Paddington Railway Station."

The Old Lion had had his day. Poetry was going to the dogs whose satirical intensity gave them a more feral bite. Long in the tooth he might be, but he could still manage the Grand Snarl—he'd bow out roaring on the wings of an old song while the next generation caught its prosaic trains to a future from which its grandchildren would be setting out on a space-craft to Mars. . . .

How neat and historical this all seems now. Time has absorbed an urgent, living issue, pickled it and put it in the Museum. Yeats and Eliot, the one with his florid bow and the other with his neck-tie asserted by a simple pin, sit side by side in the same glass case while we busy ourselves with the new proscriptions, keep the old quarrel alive on a different footing, and are bent on appropriating the future according to our own temperaments. We choose our representatives, fight our style wars, seem all too often to argue about Poetry with a greater enthusiasm than we read poems, roll up the magazines, hit each other over the head with partisan editorials, talk about the *importance* of literature, the *politics* of literature, the *survival* of literature—and yet, if we're poets,

[1] *Poetry Review*, Vol 72, No 2 (21 Earls Court Square, London, SW5), £1.50.

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we make our poems in spite of it all; we make them, as Yeats said, and however old-hat it sounds, "out of the quarrel with ourselves." We write—when all the hurly burly's done—"as men have always written." Every battle of the factions is a campaign lost and won, the only true survivors being the few good poems left standing. Of course the critical debate must go on (the fashions, the ins-and-outs of favour) because we'd be dead if it didn't, but as for this reviewer, now that he has finished piling on the rhetoric of his convictions, he hopes simply to be able to spot a few of these survivors whether they turn out to be in "the poetic language of the future" or not.

What, though, are the chances for the omnibus reviewer as the books come flooding in? One of the current batch (useful for cross-reference, suggests the editor) is Thom Gunn's *The Occasions of Poetry*,[2] a collection of essays, some of them—and some of the best—autobiographical: "In the late fifties and sixties", Gunn warns me, "I wrote a series of omnibus poetry reviews for the *Yale Review*. It is always good to make yourself read poetry with close attention, but I became more and more dissatisfied with the business of making comparatively fast judgments on contemporary poets. Specifically, there were books that I simply changed my mind about later on." *Ave atque vale*, and one of the wisest remarks in a most intelligent volume. I shall bear it in mind as I begin.

EDWIN MORGAN'S *Poems of Thirty Years*[3] is an omnibus in itself, a 442-page Bumper Book of wholly serious fun and games by a versatile poet who is probably best known for his shapes and sounds. He's *homo ludens*, par excellence—an echo-chamber of tongues and dialects, and a canny inventor of new languages:

> *—Although a poem is*
> *undoubtedly a "game"*
> *it is not a game.*
> *And although now it is even*
> *part of the game to say so,*
> *making it a "'game'"*
> *is spooky, and we'll*
> *not play that.*
>
> *—Who are you kidding, said*
> *the next card. You just played.*

Morgan is always playing the next card. Often it seems as if his brilliant mind is a space-age *Nautilus* crammed with sonar equipment and insta-

[2] *The Occasions of Poetry*. By THOM GUNN. Edited and with an Introduction by Clive Wilmer. Faber and Faber, £6.95.

[3] *Poems of Thirty Years*. By EDWIN MORGAN. Carcanet, £8.95.

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matic cameras, and bristling with moral antennae. He's a humane Captain Nemo, alert to every signal from the darkest recesses of his ship. Many of the poems are cast in the form of Odysseys, extended sequential narratives which relish the strangeness of their own wordscapes, stretch the imagination and hint, wittily, at the responsibilities that begin in dreams: "to me it seems/the virtue's in the questions, not the answers." Certainly a profound sense of virtue is crucial to the impact of Morgan's vision. All the Sci-Fi paraphernalia is there to entice the ghost into the machine, and as one of the speakers comments in a set of Dialogue Poems, "The Whittrick":

*Machines can be persuaded to stumble on*
*dreams. . . .*
*The flash of imagination has been built in,*
*Its logic allows the leap of thought.*

Logic, the leap of thought, and sudden flashes of illumination are what make these poems, at their best, both intriguing and memorable. Edwin Morgan is particularly good at transcribing audio-constructions into their component letters, so that some kind of alien intelligence can be heard on the verge of discovering a human voice—as in that artfully contrived arrangement of consonants, "The Loch Ness Monster's Song", and in my own favourite, "The Day the Sea Spoke", which doesn't appear in this volume, presumably because it was thought to be too purely a sound-device to make sense on the printed page. In reading a book of this size thoroughly and at length, it is impossible to avoid feeling that Morgan is sometimes in danger of becoming a victim of his brilliance, and that if one turns too many pages at one sitting his inventions return to plague the reader. As "The Clone Poem" admits:

*you can have too much of a good thing too much of a good thing too much you can have too much you can you can too much of a good thing you can have have too much too much of a good thing*

But there are many good things. There are the celebratory/elegiac poems for Hemingway, Marilyn Monroe and Edith Piaf, deft little songs of innocence and experience like "Song of the Child", poems of social observation—some of them instamatic snapshots and others, like the account of helping a blind man to the lavatory in "In the Snack Bar", more slowly and remorselessly developed with much painful detail and implicit judgment but—in keeping with Morgan's approach elsewhere—a minimum of explicit comment: "Dear Christ, to be born for this!" Again and again, though, the poems return to a sense of human values defined and off-set by a deliberate futuristic chilliness: "erase the exclamation mark. Surprise/comes from old microstructure thinking."

In 30 years Edwin Morgan has come a long way from the "strain and flash and fable" of his earliest work, an amalgam of Revelation, the New Apocalypse, Vachel Lindsay razzmatazz and Anglo-Saxon hammering. In one of these early poems he has Isaac Newton speak of "Feeling, that chaos,/I sold for abstract tranquillity." In his own case, the chaos of feeling was in time to order itself into patterns where the abstract and impersonal forms would convey a far less *theatrical* intensity.

THERE'S CERTAINLY a theatrical intensity about much of James Fenton's poetry. It's full of *mise-en-scène*, cameos and verbal invention, but if early Edwin Morgan took the barn by storm, Fenton's *tours de force* are collegiate theatre—more sophisticated in their brilliance. Randall Jarrell once commented on the feeling a reader has when confronted by the writings of Robert Graves; "Here is a man who can explain everything"—the kind of alert, omnivorous intelligence which never misses a coincidence or a connection. Reading Fenton's *The Memory of War*,[4] my immediate reaction is "here is a mind which can *contain* everything." His poems are packed with information about the natural world and human behaviour. He travels as widely as he reads, writes with a bravura energy, and has understandably been placed by his admirers in the tradition of Byron. Byron, of course, wrote on horseback. Fenton, though, is a dazzling foot-soldier—he's had to be in order to reach some of the places he reports on—but he keeps his boots as supple as dancing shoes. Even his toes think.

It's easy, too, to see why he is often compared with Auden—the moral landscapes, the bizarre machinery of his fictions, the sinister undertones, the idyllic calm of a precarious truce threatened by bulletins from the frontier:

*The square, the cafe seats, the doorways are*
*empty*
*And the long grey balconies stretch out on all*
*sides.*
*Time for an interlude, evening in the country,*
*With distant cowbells providing the angelus.*
*But we are interrupted by the latest post.*

In poems as different as "Nest of Vampires" and "South Park Road" it is as if the quick-fire intelligence of young Uncle Whiz were informing the erudite, gossipy syllabics of the later Auden, but beneath it all runs a disturbed, personal seriousness which reminds me of Robert Graves's *Pier Glass* period and of Auden's immense (un-

[4] *The Memory of War, Poems 1968-1982*. By JAMES FENTON. Salamander Press, £6.95.

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reciprocated) admiration for Graves which is too often ignored by those who see the apostolic succession of modernism as passing on from Eliot to Auden. Fenton's nursery-worldish nonsense poems, "The Empire of the Senseless", are peculiarly English—the Oxford of Lewis Carroll fallen into a state of lost innocence and taking a vacation in post-war Europe; a kind of jabberwocky in jackboots. In his more sustained work, such as "A German Requiem" and "A Staffordshire Murderer", there is a haunting sense of the repressed and the unsaid: "It is not what he wants to know./ It is what he wants not to know./It is not what they say./It is what they do not say." The horrors are oblique, hinting at the "godawfulness" of a civilisation at the end of its moral tether—values fragmented into a display of wit which is both coruscating and appalled. The best of Fenton's poems about the war in East Asia, "Dead Soldiers", demonstrates this with great force, and in "The Fruit-Grower in War-Time" he uses a collage technique to the same end, offering (along with the "found poem *composé*" method of "Chosun") his own contribution to the language of the future.

Fenton's greatest weakness is apparent when the poems, as some of them do, tip the balance towards mere cleverness and display. "The Skip", written rather uncharacteristically in a self-concious public-bar Larkinese, is an extended identity-fantasy in which the narrator throws his life on a skip and picks up another's found lying there. It's very clever, super-symmetrical and just too knowing by half; a poem full of laboured point whereas in the best work the moral concern is in the play of intelligence.

THE PLAY OF INTELLIGENCE has always been a distinguishing mark of Thom Gunn's poetry, and his critical essays show that it is what he values most in the poetry of others. Writing on the early work of Gary Snyder—a significant signpost en route to his own Americanisation—he singles out a poem which is "about feeling the cleanness of the senses" and goes on to observe that "cleanness, exactness, adequacy are the first impressions we have of the language and the rhythms . . . rhythms at one with the perceptions, neither their servants nor their masters." It is this kind of firm grace, a lyrical pact between servant and master, the practice of an efficient sensibility, that Gunn has always seemed to go for. In his strongest poems he has achieved a balance of rule and energy where, with an increasing confidence in the handling of free verse and syllabics, the celebrated pose has gradually relaxed into a more mature poise.

The poems I like most in *The Passages of Joy*[5]

[5] *The Passages of Joy*. By THOM GUNN. Faber and Faber, £3.00.

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are, in the words of one of them, exercises "in stance, and/in the muscle of feeling." They are full of teasing questions of identity, and often turn on a moment of complex interplay experienced as a creative tension. In "Night Taxi", Gunn assumes the personality of a taxi-driver and is soon caught up in considerations which reflect his own poetic preoccupations:

> *Do I pass through the city*
> *or does it pass through me?*
> *I know I have to be loose,*
> *like my light embrace of the wheel,*
> *loose but in control. . . .*

This is dangerously close to *Midnight Cowboy* folksiness of the "you can take the boy out of the city but you can't take the city out of the boy" variety, but Gunn's continual alertness to the need to be "loose but in control" (or, as he reverses it in the sonnet "Keats at Highgate", "perhaps not well-dressed but oh no not loose") keeps the reader involved with his search for that fusion of passion and intellect which, for him, is the essence of a good poem. His scenarios have increasingly become the streets and bars of San Francisco or New York but they are not just those of a convert to the American way of life excited by local colour. They are occasions for the exploration of "the cool source of all that hurry/and desperate activity", just as in the autobiographical sequence about living in London, "Talbot Road", his memories weave their way between impressions of remoteness and pressing activity. "A boy . . . in the house opposite" watching the street

> *sat in his white shirt at the window . . .*
> *. . . poised, detached in wonder*
> *and in no hurry*
> *before he got ready one day*
> *to climb down into its live current.*

Gunn's imagination makes something talismanic out of that white shirt. It is luminous with an aura of precarious innocence, and the boy is his secret sharer. When, though, the poems become merely a part of that "live current", when they are loose to the point of hanging out—as in some of the pieces which seem to do no more than celebrate *coming* out—they seem very limp indeed. The free-booting innocent abroad, preoccupied with the "warm teasing tickle" in the cave of a handshake which takes his mind off toothpaste, offers whimsical glimpses of the gay life but fails to make them more than a faintly embarrassing catalogue of local thrills. The gap between Gunn's best and worst poetry remains a vast one, and points to a paradox he has not yet resolved.

THE KIND OF POETRY Christopher Reid writes offers dozens of neat little hostages to those who don't warm to his particular brand of snappy wit. It is easy to take phrases from his new collection,[6] as "in the playground of impromptu metaphors" or "the tiny boudoir-church/that is my favourite", and stick them as labels on his poetic baggage. Nor is it hard to single out his "grave rumpuses, flytings/of fanfare and frugal whoopee" and see him as a dinky Wallace Stevens. This would be to do him some injustice, though. His poems are pleasantly inventive, beatitudinous charms, or they are mischievously disconcerting like verbal/visual equivalents of Satie or Milhaud—"a saxophone/oozing into/efflorescence." What I find disappointing about them is—again to take one of his perfectly wrought phrases, of which there are perhaps just too *many*—that they don't amount to more than "tokens of possible eloquence." I've read somewhere that Reid is an admirer of the potter Lucie Rie, so he'll remember a comment she made about the moment when she opens her kiln being "not a revelation—a surprise." Reid's work is full of surprises—his pots are splendidly turned and immaculately glazed—but it never moves me to more than a feeling of wistful tenderness or a recognition that the world, viewed from a certain angle, does after a fashion look like that. The church painting where "heaven itself/is graced by an off-centre patch of damp" is typical of the Reid frisson—that *graced* preparing for a delicious coup of witty bathos. Robert Frost observed that a good poem begins in delight and ends in wisdom. Reid's poetry, however serious its implications, begins and ends in delight.

DELIGHT OF A KIND seems to be what John Ash is after in *The Goodbyes*.[7] His surrealist eleven-finger exercises keep dissolving into themselves and, as he puts it in "What Remains", all definitions are "approximate and free." I must confess to a preference for what Edward Thomas called the "fixed and free" and to a degree of puzzlement when led, line by extended line, through a leisurely sequence of random associations. The trip is pleasing enough, although much of the scenery is made up out of the familiar stage props of Ash's French precursors, and I'm not sure that such all-out surrealism is anything but a dead-end however much the poet may slip in sharply-observed images of contemporary life. These poems—and not just because of their author's name—recall the widely-praised "melodic trains" of John Ashbery: "it is a kind of *movement* we want above all else", writes Ash, but movement as a *raison d'être* seems to me to be a poor substitute for poetic *action*. Poems in which little else happens but the poem itself last no longer than the experience of reading them:

[6] *Pea Soup*. By CHRISTOPHER REID. Oxford University Press, £4.50.

[7] *The Goodbyes*. By JOHN ASH. Carcanet, £4.00.

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*Similarly*
*you will like the people here but if you choose*
*to ignore them no offence will be taken . . .*

*. . . silences*
*have to be orchestrated, portraits drawn with*
*invisible ink*
*if we are to know what is really taking place*
*beyond this pale surface that is so satisfying in*
*itself. . . .*

Of course, it is impossible to quote fairly from *The Goodbyes*. Whatever their limitation, the poems are at least whole or nothing, and indeed their surfaces *are* satisfying in themselves. Which is something.

So far the poets under review have been of particular interest because of their style and language. With the work of U. A. Fanthorpe and Tom Rawling we come down to English earth and a sensible, generous verse firmly rooted in social observation, daily routine and carefully tended memory. *Standing To*[8] and *Ghosts at my Back*[9] are both modestly excellent books and each, in its own way, is memorably human. U. A. Fanthorpe's gift is for looking on the worst side and reporting back with compassion. Her poems alternate between a gentle despair and a brisk stoicism nowhere more marked than in the fine "Fanfare" which opens her book and in which she celebrates her thrifty, fatalistic mother; the woman for whom "homes were only provisional,/Bivouacs on the stony mountain of living." The poem sets up a beautiful contrast with "my extrovert dog of a father,/With his ragtime blazer and his swimming togs/tucked like a swiss roll under his arm." I finished "Fanfare" feeling great affection for this redoubtable lady, her trench wit and her gloomy relish of every fresh disaster, and—I think—appreciating how a gift of temperament can be inherited. The daughter, now, is "standing to" in her own way as a poet, "making/Happiness keep its distance" but alert to occasions for compassion and love. In another good poem, "The Guide", she writes of Virgil who, learning the secrets of his beemaster father, "trudged further into suffering/And pity than other people,/Led to accept his vocation/By the annals of the hive." The hive that has taught U. A. Fanthorpe so much is that "lucent comb"—as Philip Larkin describes it—the hospital. She has worked for some time as a hospital clerk, and several of the best poems in *Standing To*, as in her previous collection, come out of this experience. Her range, though, is greater than this might seem to suggest. Among much else, there are four serio-comic monologues which explore

[8] *Standing To*. By U. A. FANTHORPE. Harry Chambers/Peterloo Poets, £3.00.

[9] *Ghosts at my Back*. By TOM RAWLING. Oxford University Press, £3.95.


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how the masculine world of Shakespeare's tragedies looks from a woman's angle. They are outstandingly funny and wise.

*Ghosts at my Back* gets off to an inauspicious start. The first poem begins, "I am wandering through Dickinson's/Dictionary of Cumberland dialect" (oh yes?), and is closely followed by two equally flat openings—"It's not nostalgia" and "Enough to hear/The names of the fells." *Isn't* it nostalgia? *Is* it enough? However, as soon as Tom Rawling works his way back into the past (he's in his sixties and this is his first book of poems), he allows himself space to recreate it. Memory becomes imagination, and the poetry celebrates "the bond with those who bred me" in sharp vignettes. There are also some fine poems about fishing, their skilled free verse rhythms attentive to the "strategem of rod and line":

*Now in the dark pool*
*Panic races, twangs the line*
*Screeches the reel, runs*
*Till the rod's spring compels*
*Obedient circles,*
*Flank-flash drowning in air,*
*Drawn to the net*
*Where my loaded club*
*Kills.*

Before starting to write poems, Rawling wrote numerous specialist articles on fishing, and this seems to have paid off in much the same way as did Edward Thomas's prose about country matters. In each case the material was obviously just waiting for its destined shape.

And getting even further down to earth, there's John Whitworth's second collection, *Poor Butterflies*.[10] Its huggy-bear aggression and hectoring pyrotechnics force the reader into the ring as a contender. At Oxford, Whitworth tells us,

*I stopped being a working-class culturemonger,*
*Inserting FUCK every fourth word,*
*Being by rote an offensive turd,*
*Confusing honesty with rudeness*
*And sexual success with lewdness.*

I don't believe it. Or perhaps, on mature reflection, he decided to revert. His enjoyable, clever, scatological verse rejoices in offensive turdery, is honestly rude (or rudely honest?) and relishes the lewder anecdotes of sex. Added to which he can make rhyme do anything in any position. His poor butterflies are broken on the wheel and keep coming back for more. No language of the future here, only an eternal public-bar present.

[10] *Poor Butterflies*. By JOHN WHITWORTH. Secker & Warburg, £4.95.

# Our Schools: A Tragic Split

## *Anglo-American Attitudes—By* ESMOND WRIGHT

AT A TIME when almost all we read carries *Angst* as its message, not the least disturbing was the report from the Department of Education & Science (December 1981) that the English grammar school is threatened with extinction. Of the 3,840,000 children who now attend maintained secondary schools in England, only 3% go to a grammar school. Moreover, this represents a steady decline: the percentage was 4% in 1980, 11% in 1974, 18% in 1971. Of those now attending secondary schools, 90% go to comprehensive schools—in 1971 the proportion was 36%. It matters little whether Mrs Shirley Williams or Roy Hattersley or Neil Kinnock wields any influence on education policy after 1984; the damage has, it seems, largely been done, and by the first of them as much as by any other. The ending of the special role of the grammar school in English education and of the grant-aided school in Scotland (a ladder up which so many Labour leaders have climbed), along with the campaign against selection, external examinations, and hierarchies of all kinds, has been the most culpable act of recent Labour administrations. Nor has it, of course, stopped there. In September 1973 Roy Hattersley made plain the intention of the Labour Party "initially to reduce and eventually to abolish private education in this country." And in March 1975 Reginald Prentice, then Secretary of State for Education and Science, announced that in September 1976 direct grants to schools would be abolished.

The laws, however, as Edmund Burke said two centuries ago, "go but a little way." One result of Labour's policy was that, by 1976, 119 direct-grant schools chose not to become comprehensive but to go independent, and among them some of the academically best schools in the country. As

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John Rae (Headmaster of Westminster School, and former Chairman of the Headmasters Conference) puts it in *The Public School Revolution*:[1]

> "the fact that by removing the direct grant they had created in one year more fully independent schools than had been created in any previous century did not concern them. They did not see this as a strengthening of the independent sector but as a postponement of the day of reckoning. Like soldiers retreating to a second line of defence, the direct grant schools that chose independence would soon find that their new position could also be attacked."

But alongside this inadvertent and unexpected strengthening of the independent sector there has been another trend, running quite counter to Labour's ideological commitment to egalitarianism. Four per cent of all children in Britain still go to independent schools, of which no less than 1,350 are recognised as efficient by the Department of Education and Science. These schools educate some 360,000 boys and girls between the ages of five and eighteen. Nor do these figures suggest the real significance of independent education in Britain. A much higher proportion of independent-school pupils stay on in the sixth form: 23% of all pupils taking three or more A-levels are in independent schools. Of the places at Oxford or Cambridge, 50 to 55% go to students from independent schools; and there they are rivalled only by pupils from the remaining maintained grammar schools.

Nor is the curriculum a confirmation of the continuing dominance of classics. In 1965 all but one of the senior Queen's Scholars at Westminster took classics at A-level; in 1979 only one did, the majority taking science and mathematics. In an analysis in 1976–77 of 14,000 boys leaving 160 independent schools, the Independent Schools' Careers Organisation found that engineering was the most popular career. Half the boys going from public schools to university in 1980 were to study engineering, science, and medicine. It needs no emphasis that parents value the education and the opportunities independent schools offer: they manage to find and pay high fees. But it is too little realised that some 20% of pupils in independent schools are in receipt of financial help, quite apart from the recent Assisted Places Scheme. Despite all the difficulties posed to it by inflation and high costs, the independent sector in Britain is flourishing. Indeed as Sixth Form Colleges develop (and weaken, as they must, the schools from which they draw their pupils) and as numbers in all schools drop with the decline in the birth rate (there were 224 fewer primary schools and 26 fewer secondary schools in 1981 than in 1980), the relative importance of the independent sector will become steadily greater.

The campaign to maintain excellence, and to preserve parental choice and variety of schooling, has been quietly countering the more vocal (and much more frequently televised) campaign for comprehensivisation and egalitarianism—although it might be added that when television did present its series on Radley, that school was swamped by requests for information and for entry. When it concerns their children, people, even Labour MPs, still want and will pay for the best they can get, and (Mrs Williams apart) to hell with ideology. Convictions can bend.

THESE CONCLUSIONS are not necessarily the most important presented by John Rae. He has in fact a political message:

> "Until 1979 the schools were preoccupied with survival. The Conservative Party has since helped the schools financially with tax changes and with the Assisted Places Scheme. It has also created a climate in which independence and excellence are not regarded as anti-social. But the Party has not given much constructive thought to the problems that independent

[1] *The Public School Revolution: Britain's Independent Schools 1964-79*. By JOHN RAE. Faber, £6.50.

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schools raise. In Britain, as in other countries such as Australia, a flourishing independent sector does exacerbate divisions in society and creates—or at least appears to create—inequality of access to opportunity. There are those who believe that the only solution to these problems in a democracy is for all the maintained schools to reach the high standards that some already achieve, so that parents will no longer wish to spend large sums on private education. I share that view because it seems to me the only one that reconciles the demands of equal opportunity and of liberty. But it is not a view that carries conviction unless those who hold it are seen to make the improvement of the maintained sector their priority. So far the Conservative Party has failed to convince its critics that this is their aim."

He is probably at his best in describing the challenge presented to heads like himself not only by the Labour political threat but by the social upheavals in attitudes in the 1960s, by long hair and drug addiction, by defiance of authority that became the convention to defy convention, and by the economic and inflationary pressures of the 1970s that tested the schools' capacity to survive. He gives us a highly personal and readable survey, and is not afraid to name names and to award marks, sometimes low ones. In its frankness and vividness, as well as in its picture of a remarkable fight back by the independent sector, his book offers a striking contrast to the picture presented in two recent surveys of American schools.

THE UNITED STATES has, of course, been the place from which Socialist politicians like Tony Benn and Shirley Williams have drawn their ideas on comprehensive schools. Both of them ought to know how false the parallel is, and if they do not they should subscribe to *Daedalus*.[2] One school, it should be said, comes out of this probing with an all-but-impeccable reputation—St Paul's at Concord (New Hampshire), which must, on this showing, rival or even outmatch Eton and Winchester. It is not, of course, fair to judge other schools by comparison with it. It is private, not public; boarding, not day; a college prep school pointed towards Ivy League Universities, not a comprehensive high school. Its 80 buildings, including its Gothic chapel at which daily morning attendance is compulsory, are spread over 1,700 acres in a leafy valley in scenic New England. With its white clapboard dorms framed by evergreens and set against a bright blue sky, and bells tolling at intervals, the ambience is idyllic. Its 500 pupils are drawn from the rich and well-endowed and are carefully selected: 140 enter each year from 1,500 applicants, and only a handful are blacks or from minority groups. Its 80 staff (aided by 100 ancillaries) allow a teaching ratio of 6 to 1. Its library has 50,000 volumes. The average cost per pupil is $10,000 a year, against the average $2,500 for pupils in public high schools (in Catholic schools the average is lower than this).

St Paul's is less a school than a Utopia. The gap between it and the average school anywhere else is all but unbridgeable. So wide is the gap that educationists and politicians, there as here, have inevitably seen the few schools like it as enemies to envy and to destroy rather than as models to emulate. But, like Eton and Winchester, it flourishes, thanks to able leadership, a splendid academic reputation and remarkable fund-raising.

There is a remarkable parallel between independent schooling in America and in Britain—and a similar public inattention to it. Not until James Coleman's report, *Public and Private Schools* (1977) with its accolades for what private schools in America are seeking to do in maintaining high academic performance, has private education been adequately noticed. But 18% of all American schools are private (and almost all the very best of its colleges and universities, including Harvard and Yale, Princeton and Stanford, Dartmouth and Williams); they enrol over five million (10.7%) of all elementary and secondary school students, they employ 275,000 teachers (11.1% of all teachers) and spend over $4 billion a year (5% of all annual school expenditure), two out of three of these five million students attend Roman Catholic schools. Only with President Reagan's appointment of Terrel H. Bell as Secretary of State for Education was a voice heard calling for national respect for private schools. Speaking in favour of support for the private education sector through tax credits shortly after his appointment, he said, "If we strengthen our private schools and provide some friendly competition and contrast, we may also strengthen our public schools in the process. . . . I would say that private schools are an important part of our total education system."

BUT IF the second of these two volumes is devoted to private education, the first is primarily a commentary on public education, and it is by comparison a worrying portrait. It is designed to counter the accounts of the mass media, with their emphasis on "student violence, scholastic decline, teacher incompetence and bureaucratic disorder. . . ." Moreover, the public school is the nearest thing that exists in the United States to an established church, its basic ideology agrarian,

[2] *Daedalus: America's Schools: Public and Private* (Summer 1981), and *America's Schools: Portraits and Perspectives* (Fall 1981). American Academy of Arts and Sciences, $4.00 each.

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Protestant-republican, secular and patriotic. The post-World War II rivalry with Soviet Russia—and notably *Sputnik* in 1957—led to a vast expenditure on public education. The National Defense Education Act was the first major federal investment in pre-college education since the vocationally-oriented Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. Under the leadership of Lyndon Johnson (once a Texas schoolteacher) all national problems—whether of security or economic growth, poverty or racial inequality—were deemed remediable through "better schooling." As a result of the National Defense Education Act and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, federal aid to education rose from half a billion dollars in 1958 to 6.5 billion in 1978. Between 1960 and 1969 more than twice as many institutions of higher education were established than in any previous decade in American history—700 new institutions, 70% of which were two-year colleges, all needing teachers. There are GSLs (guaranteed student loans, at subsidised rates of interest); new auxiliary assistance loans for parents facing college costs that can now reach $12,000 a year at the most expensive private institutions; Pell grants for the poor (formerly known as BEOGs—basic educational opportunity grants); a college work-study programme. The guaranteed student loans for which everyone was made eligible in 1978 are by far the biggest, costliest and most abused subsidies; some well-off students have not been above accepting loans at 7% and investing their own money at better rates of return. In 1981 3.6 million students borrowed nearly $8 billion; the cost to the government of student loans (mostly unrecoverable) is nearly $3 billion. Until the late 1960s this was the golden age—there as here.

FEW NOW share these illusions of the Great Society. There came a social and intellectual revolt in the late 1960s, which sent shock-waves round the world. It was the product of many forces, not confined to the US: Viet Nam and the revolt against the established, the parental, and the authoritarian, and against Big (and costly) Government; the Civil Rights movement; the urban fiscal crisis; the tax revolts at both state and local level; the drive towards teacher unionisation and the rivalry between the two national unions, the National Educational Association and the American Federation of Teachers. Given the continuation of fiscal controls and the inevitability of a demographic decline, the pattern projected by Stephen Bailey, Professor of Educational Policy and Administration at Harvard, is of "ghettoized schools for the urban poor, non-English language schools for Hispanics, racially pure schools for the bigoted; religious schools for the devout; and for the well-off a wholesale reversion to the private academies of the nineteenth century."

THERE ARE FORCES at work in the American public sector in education that are portents for us in Britain, and portents to avoid if we can. There is a plethora of course-offerings, almost all of them in easy options: family life, drug abuse, sex education, moral education, career guidance, ethnic studies, the environment, to name only a few. These, even more than the host of "electives", need rationalising. There is, even more than here, a matching plethora of people other than teachers invading the schools: social psychologists, "shrinks" of every type, advisors and administrators doing anything but work in classrooms. Gerald Grant of Syracuse University writes (*Daedalus*, Summer 1981):

> "Public education in urban areas today is increasingly instrumental, technicist, adversarial, and officially value-neutral, all a result of good intentions gone awry and an uncritical faith in what schools alone can do to solve social ills. American public schools shouldered an enormous share of the burden of creating a more equal society. As the schools became a


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primary avenue for the social initiatives of the sixties and the seventies, mountains of new law and regulation piled up, radically altering the freedom of action that adults in the school had previously enjoyed, and uprooting old communities and established ways of acting. . . .

The new laws and programs also created legions of new specialists and technicians in the schools, whose salaries were paid through federal and state funds, and who therefore often felt less loyalty to the school principal or to the school's traditional authority structure. One of the elementary schools in our sample has ninety-one staff persons. Of these, only thirty-three are teachers with full-time classroom responsibilities. Twenty-three are resource persons on duty for significant parts of the day and week: social workers, psychologists, music teachers, art, reading specialists, fourteen full-time aides, and two co-principals. Thirty years ago, with a similar enrollment, the school had only one principal, one secretary, a janitor, a teacher in each class, no aides, one art teacher, and one part-time physical education instructor. A shift in that magnitude has enormous implications for leadership, for the task of creating a means of coordination within the school. It is much more complex than the problem of wider span of control, for what these numbers reflect is the growth of separate professional cultures in the school. New roles are being shaped, statuses competed for, and conflicting ideologies or modes of interaction with the child tested. Our field notes are replete with instances of these tensions.

Teachers are disgruntled because psychologists make decisions about placing children in their classrooms without consulting them. Teachers who are responsible for an in-school detention room complain that counselors are unavailable when needed, because 'they are always in meetings or interviews and can't be disturbed.' Aides feel they should have equality with the teachers in the classroom and are reluctant to accept direction."

Inevitably, teaching itself in the public schools—far more there than here—is in decline. Fewer college freshmen opt for teaching as a career today than at any time in the last 30 years. Of those who do, their intellectual ability, as measured by standardised tests, is lower than that of college students in any field except ethnic studies. Of those already teaching, almost half report that if they had the choice to make again, they would not choose teaching.

This is hardly surprising in schools that have lost their traditional respect for moral values, and in which the teacher-pupil relationship is largely adversarial, with police walking the corridors to keep order. And Gerald Grant continues:

"Nearly two years of participant observation in an urban high school that is 47 per cent black and has diverse ethnic and social class composition has convinced me that the increasingly legalistic character of public education is a shift of profound dimensions. In this school, as in many, order in the halls and to some extent in classrooms is supervised by hall guards or quasi-police or actual police officials. The presence of raw power indicates that authority has been lost. All behaviour is regarded as tolerable unless it is specifically declared illegal. There are narrow definitions of jurisdiction. A student who complains to the school principal of being attacked is asked on which side of the street the beating took place. If it happened across the street, it would be out of the school jurisdiction and hence of no concern to the principal. A female teacher was still shaking as she told us about a group of students who had verbally assaulted her and made sexually degrading comments about her in the hall. When we asked why she did not report them, she responded 'Well, it wouldn't have done any good.' 'Why not?" we pressed. "I didn't have any witnesses," she replied. Adult authority is increasingly defined by what will stand up in court. There are fewer and fewer adults who have the confidence to act on Justice Frankfurter's dictum that 'much that is legally permitted is repugnant to the civilized mind.' If you have that confidence, and if you have created a good community, lawyers can sometimes be useful in settling a conflict, but they cannot make a community for you. . . ."

PERHAPS THE SHARPEST CONTRAST between the Public and the Private can be presented by contrasting the situation facing a student entering a Boston high school and one entering a private institution like Phillips Academy at Andover.

Thanks to the spread of children's rights literature, a student in Boston is given a 25-page pamphlet detailing his rights. In this pamphlet a student learns that there are five different types of suspension, the least serious being the short-term one for three days or less. Before even that can be meted out, a student has the right to request an informal hearing with the headmaster and his parents and, if dissatisfied, may appeal to the community superintendent. He (or she) has the right to summon student witnesses to each of these hearings and to have an advocate or lawyer appointed to represent him. Before a student can be expelled, he may exhaust all these steps and, additionally, have a formal hearing with the deputy superintendent and an automatic review and appeal by the superintendent of the schools of the city of Boston. He can be expelled only if he has afflicted serious injury on a student or staff member or has

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"repeatedly and flagrantly committed a suspendable offense and [his] continued presence in school would threaten the physical safety of others or the regular running of the school, and all appropriate disciplinary methods short of expulsion have been tried, but have not corrected [the student's] behavior." Similarly, a student cannot be transferred from one class to another in the same school unless officials can prove repeated instances of flagrant misconduct.

The Andover catalogue by contrast reads:

> "In a community such as Andover, all must commit themselves to the goals of the community and to loyalty to each other. Since education at Phillips Academy is both intellectual and humane, the students and faculty derive mutual support from sharing of themselves and their ideals. . . . Yet the happiness of everyone in the community depends on consideration and awareness, restraint and candor, discretion and shared joy. Collaboration toward these imprecise but worthwhile ends is an expectation which all in the academy hold. . . ."

THERE ARE CLEARLY two distinct streams here, the private and the public. Each comes out of a common and a noble single source: the idea of the public school in the American (and the Scottish) sense, where children from all classes and backgrounds would be given a shared educational experience. For Americans it would be not only shared but both democratic and patriotic. At the heart of it would be a tradition of literacy, of acquaintance with the classics and the Great Books, of intellectual curiosity and inventiveness, of responding to challenges and overcoming them, and—not least—of pride in being American.

The two schools that I have chosen as examples demonstrate that this common educational system has now been shattered. At the schools level, there is a civilisation split as wide as that which separates Eton and Winchester from, say, St Saviour's in Liverpool. One stream respects knowledge and learning, is based (still) on a notion of training an élite, is privileged and expensive. The other would seem to have arrived at totally different values, to be based on an adversary view of society training students—in so far as it trains them at all—to oppose, to thwart, to disrupt their society; and its teachers need to be supported by police.

For Americans the split is serious—for the democratic public school of Horace Mann's imagining was a great, perhaps the greatest, American achievement. It could be that a golden age has gone beyond recall.

## The Watering Can

This rose would fountain rust
If it were ever used,
An oxidised disgust,
Its beaten zinc is bruised.

A seethe of mineral
Makes waves inside the rim,
Old water's rise and fall
Remeasuring the whim

Of balance and sunlight
One August afternoon,
The lunatic delight
Of spilling with the moon,

The pressure at the tap,
The lift of emptiness,
The buoyancies that shape,
Contingencies that press.

Propped drunk against a wall,
Rehearsing some old tilt,
I watch my shadow fall
And fill it to the hilt.

*John Levett*

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# Who Needs a Flag?

## *Thoughts on German Attitudes, New & Old*

*By* ELISABETH NOELLE-NEUMANN

PERHAPS the theme for discussion was not meant as seriously as I took it at the time. It read: "*Does Democracy Need a Flag*?" It was some 20 years ago that this panel discussion took place at a conference in Marl, and I recall that all the speakers except me said we did *not* need a flag. Among them were well-known Germans: Ernst Glaeser (the author of the once famous book *Vintage 1902*), Erich Kuby, Jens Feddersen—there were eight of us altogether, almost all journalists and writers.

"What do we actually need this bit of cloth for?" The expression *Einen Fetzen Stoff*, a bit of cloth, was used several times. I went to great lengths to try to explain that, rather than being a bit of cloth, a flag was a symbol, a signal for an idea, comprehensible to all and publicly visible. At the time I thought I was faced with people who were ignorant of social psychology. But from today's perspective, I believe that I misunderstood my colleagues on the panel. Their main concern was the fear of a new German Nationalism. If no symbols of a nation were set up to begin with, or if they were assigned a completely obscure role and acquired no real public visibility, a new ground-swell of nationalism would thus be prevented.

This thinking was certainly also shared by those who fought for eliminating the playing of the national anthem at the end of every radio-broadcasting day. During the discussion in Marl I quoted an Allensbach survey from the autumn of 1961:

> *"Do you remember when you last heard our national anthem, the Deutschlandlied?"*

Almost two-fifths (38%) said they had not heard it at all since 1945; those who had heard it, when questioned further, said in the main that they had heard the German national anthem on television or on the radio. If the public effect of this national symbol was to be kept to a minimum, it had to be cut from radio programming.

The mood at the panel discussion in Marl was actually rather cheerful; that is, all the others—or so it seemed—were cheerful, witty, even brilliant, except for me. In a fit of annoyance I said: If the question read, "Do we need oxygen?", we would at least be in a position to answer it. But in this case, where we were dealing with a question of social psychology, a political question, it was obvious that no one was concerned that we did not know more about what a community needs to maintain itself. Perhaps the question should be reformulated and, rather than asking, "Does democracy need a flag", we should ask, "Is democracy viable if it is completely and utterly abstract?"

I WAS REMINDED of all this again when the results of an Allensbach study were made available recently. This was a survey UNESCO had set in

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motion in 1953: the attitudes of the Germans towards family and neighbourhood, work and leisure time, politics and the church, were all investigated. In 1979 the survey was repeated with an essentially unchanged questionnaire.[1]

We are usually spared the sight of a society in a state of flux. Even though (as is so often stated) the world is changing at an ever more rapid rate, social changes usually occur so slowly that they are not clearly perceived. This is why those who want to "change the system" go so far as to devise publicly visible symbols to call attention to the change, e.g. the long hair worn by young men in the 1960s, which so shocked the older generation. Although long hair was shocking as a symbol of protest against society's established roles and rules, the overall symbolism was not quite comprehended. Now the *Longitudinal Study 1953–1979* forces us to look at a process of social change while it is still occurring, and there is no evidence that it has actually ended.

Are men and women becoming "more alike"? This process was predicted for our times by Max Scheler, who characterised the present age by a general "reduction of differentiation", an "equalisation (*ein Ausgleich*)." There is a certain lack of imagination in taking this to refer simply to certain external characteristics, e.g. women with "men's" hairdos, in pants and a jacket, doing men's jobs; and husbands who push prams and do the dishes. For what the 1953–1979 study actually shows is something of a very different nature. In order to distinguish more clearly what is occurring, let me focus our attention on young men and women between the ages of 16 and 24 and, to broaden the numerical base, in part also on the age group between 16 and 29.

[1] The sponsor was INTERVERSA, Hamburg, under its director, Dr Horst Stützer, who had begun his career in Allensbach at the end of the 1940s. The results were published as Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, Edgar Piel (eds), *Eine Generation später: Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1953–1979, Die Allensbacher*—INTERVERSA *Langzeitstudie (A Generation Later: the Federal Republic of Germany 1953–1979, Allensbach*—INTERVERSA *Longitudinal Study)*, K. G. Saur (Munich, London, Paris, New York 1982), DM40.

What is odd is the way the process of "becoming more alike" occurs. It is not simply that the young women are increasingly similar to the young men, but that we observe a two-fold development: the young men have reduced their level of activity while the young women have not (or sometimes have even given evidence of more activity than in 1953). Young men and young women have thus moved closer in areas where they were "typically different" in 1953.

The family has always been the focus of women's life in all cultures, so it is not surprising that in 1953 (in the younger generation too) it was especially women who wanted "more togetherness" in the family: young women register 35% in favour, young men 22%. A generation later, in 1979, the reverse is true: 30% of the young men, rather than 22%, would now like to see "more togetherness" in the family; of the young women it is now only 24% rather than 35%.

WOMEN are interested in people, their life is "related" to people; this is general knowledge. It therefore comes as no surprise that the young men and women of 1953 gave different responses to the question:

> *"If you had to be alone frequently without your family or friends—would you be unhappy or not?"*

*"Would be unhappy"*, 34% of the young men and 50% of the young women said at the time. In 1979 the number of young women who say they "would be unhappy" has increased by 7%, to 57%. But for young men, it has increased by 20% to 54%; there is now almost no difference between young men and young women in their distaste for being alone.

The world of work and of occupations is a male-dominated zone. Probably no one was surprised that in 1953 61% of young men expressed a desire to continue their job-related education, while only 28% of young women did so—a difference of more than 30%. In 1979, the number of young men who want to continue job-related education has gone down by 20% from 61 to 41%; among

## *Pride in Work*

*QUESTION: "Are you proud of your occupation, your work, your profession?"*

| | *USA* | *England* | *Japan* | *Germany* | *France* | *Italy* | *Spain* | *Holland* | *Belgium* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Very proud* | 84 | 79 | 37 | 15 | 13 | 29 | 42 | 19 | 30 |
| *Somewhat proud* | 14 | 18 | 44 | 38 | 46 | 43 | 41 | 55 | 47 |
| *A little proud* | 2 | 2 | 9 | 29 | 16 | 14 | 12 | 15 | 11 |
| *Not at all proud* | — | 1 | 3 | 11 | 17 | 12 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| *Don't know* | — | — | 7 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 6 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

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young women, this desire has increased by 15%, from 28 to 43%. There is no longer any difference between young men and young women in this respect (41%/43%).

WE KNOW THAT the relationship people have to their work has changed in our time. There has been an erosion of interest in work, a dulling of the enthusiasm that is probably needed to survive the dry stretches. It is this enthusiasm which is suggested when someone responds to the question "*Do you find the work you do at present interesting or monotonous?*" by saying "*Always interesting.*" In 1953 young men tended to give this answer more than did young women, 47% as against 41%. In 1979 the number of young women who feel that their work is "*always interesting*" has been reduced by 6%, while for young men the number has decreased by 23%. Now only 24% of the young men always find their work interesting, and 35% of the young women.

As an indicator of weakness we have been using a question about Boredom in Allensbach surveys since the beginning of the 1950s:

> "*Are you familar with the feeling of time dragging on Sundays or holidays?*"

In 1953 the young women were more bored than the young men: 18% of the young men and 26% of the young women replied, "*I know the feeling of time dragging.*" We know that, in an odd, slow process, boredom has grown more and more prevalent. But not among the young women—26% felt boredom in 1953, 28% in 1979. The whole curious phenomenon applies to the young men in the younger generation: in 1979 boredom among them had increased from 18% to 34%. The comparison between young men and young women shows that the situation has now been quite reversed. Today it is the young men who are bored more often than the young women (34% as against 28%).

> "*Is there something that you really enjoy doing when you are alone?*"

The question relates to the ability to be alone and to boredom. "*Nothing*", barely a third of the young women responded in 1953, as did one-fifth of the young men. While little had changed for the women in 1979, the answer "*Nothing*" had increased for the young men from 20% to 27%; young men and young women have become "more alike" on this point too.

WE SEE that the young women of 1979 have seldom become "more passive" compared to 1953 and are often "more active." It was assumed that with the spread of the telephone, letter-writing would become outdated. This is indeed true for the young men; the number of those who never write letters has almost doubled, from 10% to 19%. According to their own information, in 1953, 18% wrote a lot or moderately frequently; in 1979 it was only 14%. But it is quite the contrary with the young women. Those who write a lot or moderately frequently have increased from 23% to 37%. Among young men, the pastime of walking (*Spaziergänge*), which encourages a love of nature, has lost ground completely. In 1953 45% took walks fairly frequently; in 1979 it was only 24%. The reverse is true for young women: "going for a walk" has gained ground from 57% to 61%. This cannot be explained simply by the young men being motorised (since the young women are also increasingly motorised). While it is true that the young men of 1979 take more weekend trips and weekend hikes than in 1953 (42%/34%), young women take even more weekend trips and hikes: an increase from 27% in 1953 to 47% in 1979. Here is the familiar picture once more: not only is the discrepancy eliminated, but the women have even gained a slight edge.

ON THE BASIS of just two points in time, 1953 and 1979, it is impossible to tell whether the process made evident here has been concluded (perhaps concluded some time ago) or whether it still continues. This was tested, using a large number of surveys, primarily from the 1960s and '70s; and it would appear that it has not yet ceased. It is possible that the process does not take hold in different areas simultaneously, and that young men have already taken over "female role models" in some areas while they are only just beginning to do so in others. The following examples relate to the world of work.

There is, for example, a question about the meaning of life (first asked in 1974).

> "*We often ask ourselves what we are living for—what the meaning of life is. Where do you essentially see the meaning of your life?*"

The response: "*I see the meaning of my life in achieving something, in getting somewhere*" was given by 65% of young men under 30 in 1974, by 51% in 1979, and finally, by 43% in 1981. In 1974 the young women thought of "achievement" (*die Leistung*) as constituting the meaning of life decidedly less (56%) than young men. In the following years there was development *away* from the idea of "achievement" among young women also, but the desire then stabilised, and there is now no difference between the results for young men and young women. Since the idea of seeing the meaning of life in achievement has continued to decline

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between 1979 and 1981, we do not know what the trend will lead to. There is a rather more feminine response to the same question: "*I find the meaning of life in having others like me, in being popular with others*", thus relating strongly to other people. Almost exactly the same proportion of young women came out in favour of this meaning of life in 1974 as in 1981 (48%/45%). The young men initially responded less strongly to this point. It is not until 1981 that popularity (*Beliebtheit*) imbues their life with meaning to the same extent as it does the young women's.

Since the early 1960s, Allensbach surveys have measured enjoyment of work, *Arbeitsfreude*, by asking:

> "*Which time do you like best—the time when you are at work or the time when you aren't working? Or do you like both?*"

It is exceptional for someone to like the hours at work best, as a rule 3 to 5%. The response "*I like both*" is an important indicator for enjoyment of work. It is just this response which has decreased steadily in the last two decades, among young men and among young women—but much more drastically for young men, so that in 1980 46% of young women still say that they really like the hours at work, but only 34% of young men.

It should also be taken as a symbol of peculiar lack of strength that young men increasingly respond to the question "*Are you familiar with the feeling of work piling up so much that you just don't know how you are going to be able to manage?*" by saying "*Am familiar with this.*" Young women do not respond to the question very differently in 1979 than in 1967, but the response "*Am not familiar with this*" decreased from 44% in 1967 to 27% in 1979 for young men. Young men now outdo young women in responding "*I have this feeling often.*"

BUT WHAT DOES ALL THIS have to do with the discussion in Marl twenty years ago, on the topic "Does Democracy Need a Flag?"

It is quite striking that what we now see with the help of demoscopic indicators and opinion statistics has already been described by Arnold Gehlen in his book *Morality and Hypermorality*, published in 1969. He described how tendencies which were a general feature of the period are strengthened where a breakdown of national life has occurred. He speaks of an "enlarged family ethic", of a "global extension of family life", and of the way in which the categories of private life and private morality take over the entire life of the nation. Private life was not, as it were, discredited by the end-of-war breakdown of 1945; it was the "private sphere whose value and dignity no one can call into doubt." This is women's *forte*; their vitality proved them capable of surviving the crises "after the [German] capitulation . . . when the family held together by women was the only institution that continued to function."

"Hypermorality", or moral hypertrophy, arises when the humanitarian ethos of familial values, elevated to an abstract level, enjoys absolute priority because the counterweight provided by the ethos of the state has been discredited or prohibited, or has decayed.

> "Pacifism, the tendency toward security and comfort, the immediate interest in and empathy with the individual human case, governmental muddling through, the willingness to accept things and people as they are—these are certainly qualities which originate and legitimately belong in the bosom of the family. It follows that they will be strongly coloured by feminism, for their children's interests instinctively influence all the value judgments women make, as does the concern for warmth and shelter, for decreased risk, and for prosperity."

Gehlen scornfully described men's situation in these circumstances:

> "But the feeling of self-worth which can be achieved amidst the privatisation just described cannot be anything but precarious; for while being the *Familienvater* may be honourable, no glory attaches to this, especially since the new conditions of life, and the nervous and moral burdens they entail, give women, with their greater vitality, the upper hand."

However, as Gehlen stated, a hidden political dimension can be discerned, "for this priority implies undermining public virtues such as the urge to assert oneself, loyalty to one's own nation, civic concern, and the desire to claim an identity—in a word: patriotism."

If we apply Gehlen's analysis, the lively, active, blossoming character of the young women, shown by the comparison of 1953 with 1979, is not merely the result of our century being positively inclined toward "liberation." There are more far-reaching reasons in post-war Germany. The women are supported by the dominance of the familial system of values natural to them, a dominance that is essentially unopposed. The young men find themselves in the reverse situation. The value system consisting of historical, national, political components, which tends to be attributed to men, is de-emphasised; it is but weakly represented in their environment, and is certainly not a means of acquiring self-confidence.

However, young men and young women have not yet become equally close in all areas. There continue to be some where they have very different attitudes (at least until recently). Where issues to

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do with pacifism—with the absolute priority of maintaining peace under all circumstances—are concerned, the young women are considerably more pacifistic than the young men.

EINEN FETZEN STOFF. "Why do we need a bit of cloth?" The question raised at the panel discussion in Marl is still in the air today; indeed it has grown in strength. This was shown by a public hearing of a *Bundestag* Committee in 1978, published under the title *The German Issue in Political Education*. One side fears a New Nationalism, sabre-rattling, Right-wing extremism, and are all for understanding the fear other nations have of a German reunification movement; they tend to doubt the reality and historical legitimacy of a German Nation. The other side fears that decreasing national consciousness also implies that the consciousness of being a state or a governmental community with a public philosophy is breaking down. As Theodor Schieder has warned: "Our citizens, and especially our younger citizens, must be able to identify with the Federal Republic as a nation, or, we should probably say, they must be able to identify with it again." The *Bundestag* Committee spoke of a "breakdown of political pedagogy on the 'German question'."

IN THE MEANTIME the black-red-gold flag is only gradually gaining acceptance among the citizens. Since 1951 the Allensbach test question on this has read:

"*Do you feel glad to see the black-red-gold Federal flag somewhere?*"

"*Why should I like it?*" or even the straight answer "*Don't like it*" was the way 54% responded in 1951, as against 23% "*I like it.*" The symbol was gradually accepted, was felt to be a symbol of one's existence within a nation. After a drop again around 1970, agreement outweighed disagreement for the first time in 1977 and then again in 1981. Both in the survey of 1977 and in the survey of 1981, 47% said "I like it (*ich freue mich*)."

The consciousness of being a nation grows slowly, without receiving any particular sustenance; for it is not yet clear whether it is *supposed* to grow. A spontaneous "*Ja*" to the question: "*Are you proud to be German?*" produces something of a bad conscience. In 1970, 70% of the Belgians said they were very proud of their nationality, as did (there are comparable surveys in the European Community) 65% of the French, 62% of the Italians, 54% of the Dutch, 37% of the Germans. A survey was also conducted in the USA in the spring of 1981: 78% said they were "extremely proud" to be American. In the German Federal Republic in 1980, 44% were very proud to be German: 31% of the under-30-year-olds, 41% of the 30-to-59 year-olds, 66% of the older people.[2]

In 1953, 78% of the Allensbach respondents replied to the question "*Which country would you prefer to live in*?" by saying Germany. In 1979, when the survey was repeated, it was 68%, and 54% of the under-30-year-olds preferred to live in Germany. In the USA in the spring of 1981, 92% said America was the country where they preferred to live.

From the point of view of Gehlen's "peace ethos", it would be simplest if the feeling of national solidarity that the population of the Western Federal Republic has with the population of the Eastern Democratic Republic were to decrease rapidly. There were actually expectations as early as the 1950s that such an "inner separation" was imminent (probably a rationalistic misunderstanding). Feelings pale, but very slowly. The objection to direct survey questions on the subject has always been that what people say is often simply a matter of paying lip-service. This is why

[2] For the sharp views on this by one German commentator, see the piece on Karl-Heinz Bohrer, in Melvin J. Lasky's discussion of "Anglo-German Attitudes" towards the Falklands War, "Embattled Positions", ENCOUNTER, September-October 1982.

## *National Pride*

*QUESTION: "Are you proud to be (an American) (an Englishman) (a German) etc?"*

| | *USA* | *England* | *Japan* | *Germany* | *France* | *Italy* | *Spain* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Very proud* | 80 | 55 | 30 | 21 | 33 | 41 | 49 |
| *Rather proud* | 15 | 31 | 32 | 38 | 43 | 39 | 34 |
| *Not very proud* | 2 | 8 | 28 | 18 | 8 | 11 | 8 |
| *Not at all proud* | 1 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 9 | 7 | 4 |
| *Undecided* | 2 | 3 | 7 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 5 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

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in 1970 we devised a test question that was free of the usual stereotypes:

> "*Imagine for a moment that you are taking a vacation somewhere far away on the Black Sea, and you happen to meet another German. By talking with him you learn that he is from East Germany. What would your first reaction be to this?*"

In 1970 and 1979 the response which ranked highest was: "*I would be curious, and interested in having a conversation with him*"—71% both at the beginning and at the end of the 1970s, and 80% of the under-30-year-olds. So lack of interest is not in question. "*I think we would get along well as two Germans abroad*" was the second most frequent response—59% at the beginning of the 1970s and 50% at the end. This was followed by "*I would be pleased*", which admittedly decreased from 62 to 48% between 1970 and 1979, but still shows that almost every other person spontaneously feels sympathy. (There is almost no difference here between younger and older persons.)

LIKE SOME NEGLECTED GARDEN, the idea of the nation has been left abandoned and untended. There is not even a proper name for it, or a shared concept of what it is. One of our questions goes:

> "*When you talk about our part of Germany* [interviewer points to a map] *with your friends, what do you call it?*"

In 1980 the population responded with six different terms, most frequently "*Germany*" (34%); 4% gave the official term, *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Federal Republic of Germany). In response to the question: "*When you hear the word Fatherland, does that sound good to you, or do you think it no longer suits our times?*", 35% of the under-30-year-olds said "*Sounds good*" in 1981; 61% responded "*No longer suits our times.*" But they have no word to replace it.

"DON'T YOU SEE how harmful pride is?" a viewer wrote to me after a television discussion I had with the West German President, Dr Karl Carstens. I had expressed the opinion that you can't live without pride—in the sense of *stolz*, being proud of your occupation, your work, as well as being proud of your country. He did not really take pride in his work, said the President.

How confident was I of the point I was making? After all, we have heard so many dire warnings that, where Germans are concerned, pride too easily turns into arrogance and presumptuousness. Writing about his own Ireland, James Joyce once remarked that nations, just like persons, must have self-confidence—but is this true?

In a recent essay entitled "On the Problems of German National Consciousness Today", one of the leading contemporary historians, Hans Mommsen, attacked "the repeated claim that a polity cannot get along without a firm self-confidence about national identity."

> "The application of the concept of 'identity' from individual psychology to society and to political systems is, at the very least, dilettantist in view of the content such concepts have acquired within the German tradition. . . . It is impossible to invoke 'national consciousness' comprising only the supposedly positive national virtues of the Germans without also breathing new life into all the nationalistic and chauvinistic elements that contributed definitively to the failure of the short-lived German Nation-state."

Was something to be learned from the extraordinary response to the television series *Holocaust* in the sense that it would help create an awareness of national feelings? Mommsen states: "It could be that twelve years of calamitous German history rather than a thousand years of sound German history may help us to achieve what could be taken to be 'healthy' national consciousness." If national pride is such a dubious matter for the Germans, might shame provide a necessary common ground?

These considerations reflect both a certain morality and a familiar intellectuality. But do the assumptions on which well-meaning historians like Hans Mommsen base their thinking actually apply? "In this connection", he states, "the most important thing is to keep in mind the fluid character of processes of Nation-building and of 'national solidarity'. . . . Surveys show that the idea of having something in common with the East German population on a national level is losing ground (especially among the younger generation) and that the national identification of younger West German citizens is almost exclusively related to their own country. . . . The formation of a national consciousness limited to the Federal Republic is now proven, as many available surveys confirm."

I would say that the material from Allensbach surveys provides no such confirmation. Admittedly, there is a methodological problem here, and it can easily lead to false conclusions. The usual simplest-question models of survey research are most appropriate for ascertaining concerns of high topicality. Concerns that are not topical tend to suffer from under-exposure, or are buried among the results—frozen in place, as it were—thus making it impossible to judge how active they still are.

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This applies very strongly to topics such as "German Reunification" and "national consciousness", which include the people of the East, and the question of whether a "national consciousness limited to the West German Federal Republic" has actually developed. If one were to ask generally about the most important political concerns of the population without presenting a specific list of choices, hardly anyone would respond: "*German Reunification*" (only 1% in 1981). Everyone knows that this is not something to be achieved easily (if at all). In confronting such a question, people will stick to what is topical. To the historian, this confirms that "German unity is not a vital problem for the majority of the West German population." But there seems to me good reason to doubt this interpretation.

AS EARLY AS the 1950s, in the first decade of our work in Allensbach, we constantly came up against the widely held view that increasing affluence had made the Germans *egoistisch*, selfish and self-centred, so that they dodged the issue of Reunification, and had abandoned all interest in it. Our survey research results—with Reunification often ranked first or second in response to the open-ended question about "most important political concerns"—were therefore called into doubt: it was claimed that they represented mere lip-service to the idea of the "German Nation" or the *Reich*.

We tried to develop new questions as a cross-check. One way of testing the firmness of a conviction consists of formulating an alternative that is as inviting and reasonable as possible. In 1956 we asked:

> "*How do you see the situation at present? Is there a point to our demanding over and over again that Germany be reunited, or should we simply let time take care of this?*"

The great majority rejected the reasonable alternative that they were offered: ". . . *let time take care of this.*" Only 25% in 1956 and 21% in 1964 accepted it. The conclusion of the *détente* treaties with the Eastern Bloc in 1970 meant that the question of Reunification was no longer topical, and would not be *aktuel* for the foreseeable future, but until the mid-'60s (the question was last asked in 1964) two-thirds of the population persistently responded "*demand over and over again (immer wieder fordern).*"

Of particular interest is Mommsen's explanation of the way the West German population of the Federal Republic has detached itself from feelings of solidarity with the East Germans: "There are many indications that the need for traditional national identification is stronger in the East German Republic than in the West. In our country, the remnants of all-German loyalty have been psychologically overlaid by anti-Communism, which is the main focus of consensus as regards the middle classes as well as some of the working class."

In fact, anti-Communism is directed at the East German Communist régime and not at the population, and hence cannot psychologically overlay all-German loyalty. If approximately half the population of the Federal Republic reacts spontaneously to the idea of meeting a citizen of the East by stating "*I don't think I would hear his true feelings because he wouldn't feel safe in expressing them*", it means that the East Germans are thought to be unfree. This does not, however, detract from the national feeling of "belonging together." There is only a slight tendency to assume that a stranger from the East is some kind of convinced Communist. It is roughly only 17% (in 1981 as in 1975) who say: "*As a West German, I don't believe that he would like to have me sit at his table because he certainly thinks very differently than we do. . . .*"

EVER SINCE the 1950s, there have been many different reasons to wish for the demise of a "national consciousness" encompassing both parts of Germany. Mommsen feels that "any step toward uniting everything that is German in one state would pose a threat to the neighbouring peoples. . . ." They share a common language but, as Mommsen says, this has become meaningless as a criterion of demarcation: "We need only consider

## *Readiness to Defend One's Country*

*QUESTION: "We all hope, of course, that there won't ever be another war. But if one were to come, would you be willing to fight for your country?"*

| | *USA* | *England* | *Japan* | *Germany* | *France* | *Italy* | *Spain* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Yes, willing to fight* | *71* | *62* | *22* | *35* | *42* | *28* | *53* |
| *No, not willing* | *20* | *27* | *40* | *41* | *46* | *57* | *27* |
| *Undecided* | *9* | *11* | *38* | *24* | *12* | *15* | *20* |
| | *100* | *100* | *100* | *100* | *100* | *100* | *100* |

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Austria and Switzerland to realise that a common language is not a valid way to draw the lines between countries. . . ."

During the debate in the newspapers about the new *Ostpolitik* at the end of the 1960s, and over and over again ever since, Austria and Switzerland have been introduced as models on which the West Germans should pattern their future relationship with the East Germans. This has had interesting effects on survey results.

The spontaneous feelings of the population of the West German Republic can be determined with the aid of the question which I have already cited as to what their reaction would be if, on holiday by the Black Sea, they encountered an East German; there has been barely any change in their response in the last decade, nor is any difference observable between the generations.

After 1970, however, there is evidence of a considerable change in the response to the follow-up question on the same meeting:

> "*And would you feel that this is a compatriot of yours, or would you not feel any more closely related to him than to an Austrian who speaks the same language?*" (In a parallel survey, the question read: "*any more closely related than to a Swiss?*" . . .)

"*Would not feel any more related to him than to an Austrian*" increased from 20 to 30% between 1970 and 1981, while "*not more closely than to a Swiss*" increased from 18 to 26%. In both versions there is a considerable increase in those who are undecided: in the Austrian comparison from 12 to 21%, and in the Swiss comparison from 13 to 22%. The responses to the effect that the *DDR* citizen was felt to be more of a compatriot, *mehr als Landsmann*, when compared with the Austrian decreased accordingly, from 68 to 49%; and when compared with the Swiss, from 69 to 52%.

As always when the topic is one that the media have treated with a particular slant, the younger generation's responses have been shaped by this experience much more than the older people's. In 1981 only 37% of the under-30-year-olds responded to the *DDR* citizen as "*a compatriot*" compared with an Austrian, while 65% of those 60 and older did.

ABOUT A YEAR AGO we carried out 2,000 interviews on the topic of German national consciousness, using a more indirect approach. One of the test questions read:

> "*Let's assume that there is a programme on television entitled 'The German Nation Today'—would you be able to say with the aid of this list what is meant in this case by the German nation?*"

A list containing four possible responses was presented. Of the respondents, 43% were of the opinion that it was the West German Federal Republic which was probably the subject of the television programme; 32% said "*The Federal Republic and the DDR together*"; 12% said "*The Federal Republic, the DDR, and the former German Eastern territories*"; and 7% "*All the German-language areas.*" Altogether, 51% of the respondents took "*die deutsche Nation heute*" to represent an entity that extends beyond the Bonn Republic. There was hardly any difference between the age groups on this point. In a parallel survey, the programme title *The German Nation Tomorrow* was used to investigate attitudes. In this instance, only 38%, rather than 43%, thought the present-day West German Republic was the subject, while 53% had a wider radius in mind (and the number of those who did not have any response was somewhat larger).

Just as a nation's sense of identity in a time of political troubles may fall back upon a community based on language, it may also try to circumvent political realities and emphasise a "common culture." As a parallel development to the tests just described, a representative sample was asked:

> "*Let's assume a programme was presented on television entitled "German Culture"—what would this be reporting on? Could you tell us with the aid of this list?*"

The list contained the same four response categories. When *die deutsche Kultur* is mentioned, 19% think of the West German Republic and the *DDR* together, while 20% think of the Bonn Republic, the *DDR*, and the former German Eastern territories; and 29% think of all the German-speaking areas. Altogether, 68% connect ideas extending far beyond the Federal Republic with "German culture"; for only 23%—and the percentage was not much higher for those under 30 (i.e. 27%)—is German culture synonymous with the Federal Republic of Germany.

Thus research does not support the historian's thesis that the younger citizens of the West German Republic identify almost exclusively with "Bonn"; whether or not the notion of "German culture" is included makes no difference. There is no evidence of any pronounced development of a "consciousness limited to the Federal Republic." Nor is there much chance of this developing, since those who express a "consciousness limited to the Federal Republic" are in the main also those who, in their responses, state that they are *not* proud of being German.

There is a tendency to underestimate the stability of the desire for German Reunification because at present Reunification is not on the diplomatic agenda, although there are occasional attempts to determine what price the West Ger-

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mans would be willing to pay for it. One example was the "Manifesto" published by *Der Spiegel* (in January 1978) citing as authors *DDR* dissidents who were German patriots in the East. The "Reunification concept" presented in the *Spiegel* "Manifesto" has reappeared in the mass media as a "new concept" about once a year ever since—in 1980, 1981, and 1982 (in the last instance it was attributed to a French source). And each year it meets with more approval from the population.

It should be noted that this is just about the same national concept Dr Adenauer tried to fight as early as the beginning of the 1950s. In the Allensbach surveys it has been presented as follows since September 1978:

> "*What do you think of the following suggestion for German Reunification? The following demands are prerequisites for Reunification:*
>
> —*East Germany must withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, and West Germany from* NATO.
>
> —*There must be guarantees that a reunited Germany will be neutral and non-aligned.*
>
> —*In a reunited Germany, free elections by secret ballot will determine the social system.*
>
> *What is your position on this? Would you welcome Reunification under these conditions or not?*"

In the space of three years, between September 1978 and November 1981, agreement ("*I would welcome this*") rose from 38 to 53%, while rejection decreased from 34% to 20%. This development presents a puzzle. It might be seen as representing the success of "neutralist" propaganda. But this is contradicted by other findings showing that *there has been hardly any change* in the population's attitude toward the NATO alliance and toward neutrality in recent years.

More than that, although there are pronounced differences between the various political camps on the question of the Western alliance and of neutralism, the responses hardly fall into line with Party preferences. Of the CDU/CSU followers, 51% agreed with the concept, as did 56% of SPD followers and 53% of FDP followers. Probably this vote simply reflects a very lively interest in "*Wiedervereinigung*", Reunification, which has increased between 1979 and 1981.

Interest in Reunification is certainly not likely to be stronger than in the Konrad Adenauer era of the 1950s. Present-day interest may, however, be more effective than ideas which are in line with the manifesto of 1978 (and the Rapacki Plan in the '50s); for at that time suspicions were even more pronounced, and proposals by the East were more often seen as representing a choice between German Reunification or the retention of Western democratic freedoms.

For some time now the perplexed German national consciousness has been presented with the concept of "national neutralism." But the effect has not been truly rousing: the word "*national*" has been anathema for too long. National feelings have been so expressly resisted as a source of infection because of their misuse by National-Socialism that they cannot possibly come straight in by the front door under the guise of "National Neutralism."

How is it that where German national consciousness is concerned, everything seems so flexible? "In our context", Professor Mommsen wrote in 1979, "the most important thing is to be aware of the fluid nature of processes of nation-building and of national solidarity. . . ." But, as I have suggested, many survey results *disprove* the assumption that national consciousness is in a fluid state, at any rate as far as the last 35 years or so are concerned.

Still, facts do not determine value-judgments. Is national pride really harmful? Or is it a vital necessity for any nation to be able to survive? There is great German uncertainty on this subject. Many will agree with the argument that the consequences of *Nationalstolz* have been tragic for Germany as well as for its neighbouring countries. The decrease in the Germans' national pride will be noted with satisfaction in many quarters. Recall the response to the question "*Are you proud to be German?*", when 42% said "*yes, absolutely*" in 1971. In 1981 it was 35%, with only 20% of those under 30 responding "*ja, unbedingt.*"

Anyone who is not even relatively proud of his own country, however, will be much less willing to defend it. In a survey in summer 1981, one of the questions was:

> "*Of course, we all hope that there will not be another war, but if it were to come to that would you be willing to fight for your country?*"

Of those under 30 who are "proud to be German", 60% said "*Yes.*" Of those who were not proud of their country, only 15% said they would be willing to fight for it.

One last point. The fact that there is a relationship between national pride and the desire to emigrate should not really come as a surprise. The overall percentage of those under 30 who state that they "*would like to emigrate*" has increased steadily in recent years. In November 1981, 35% of the under-30-year-olds said that they would like to emigrate. Of those who are definitely "*proud to be German*", 26% wanted to emigrate, while 49% of those who are "*not proud*" stated this desire. It is easy to see why there is a relationship between national pride and the ability of a nation to survive.

Who needs a national flag? A nation does.

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# RELIGION

# A Sect at Law

## *The Case of the Exclusive Brethren—By* BRYAN WILSON

SINCE THE LAST WAR, there has been undoubted progress throughout the western world in the realisation of the rights to freedom of religion, which the constitutions or the traditions of democratic countries guarantee to their citizens. That progress has occurred, however, less because western states have become more democratic than because religion itself has diminished in its social significance. To politicians, civil servants, industrialists, and even to most educationalists, religion is now a matter of indifference, no longer of much consequence to the normal operation of society. How different from the 19th century, when a lot of parliamentary time (and even of prime-ministerial time) was spent on religious affairs. In the public sector, religion is now generally accounted a dead horse.

That the media-men occasionally find it fun to beat a dead horse, when, with a parade of bogus indignation, they sensationalise the affairs of some sectarian minority, merely instances the way in which one freedom—that of the press—may occasionally be used to impugn another. As in all groups, at some time or another, troubles arise within religious movements. Sectarian religion is serious religion: it determines an entire way of life, and when dissension occurs within a sect, or between a religious minority and the wider public, it is likely to attract attention, and the dissentients themselves may seek the notice of the press, the law, or of MPs. Sects are not racial minorities, and no anti-discrimination act forbids prejudice in matters of religion: for those so minded, religious prejudice is still a free, and even an exciting ride. For journalists, religious dissension is scandal that provides titillating copy, while MPs are sometimes not above seizing the opportunity for cheap publicity by expressing popular indignation about sectarian beliefs and practices—in such measure as they understand them. In general, this is as far as the fuss goes: to government authorities religion is unimportant, and bad publicity about sects is generally recognised as no more than journalistic froth. For the minorities themselves, however, government indifference to their affairs is small solace: they suffer from such publicity when their religious rights are ridiculed.

Of course, in the long run, the official right of freedom of worship is not likely to be permanently impaired. Governmental responses to even vigorously pursued complaints about particular religious minorities have, in recent years, been increasingly hesitant, limited in scope, and minimal in effect. Religion plays little part in sustaining modern society, which operates increasingly on essentially secular assumptions: the almost instinctive rule for government is not to become embroiled in religious affairs. Officials know that religious sentiment, because of the strength of commitment that is sometimes entailed, might be potentially dangerous. They know that it is better not to interfere with religion, and certainly better not to allow it to become an issue for public debate. Religion is best restricted to the domain of private choice: as long as it is so contained it remains inconsequential to the workings of the social system.

AT THIS MANIFEST NEUTRALITY of government towards religion, those who cherish basic liberties may cheer. But they may do so too soon. Leaving aside the sometimes baleful but essentially incidental influence of the media, religious minorities may find that, despite public policy and legal provisions which (excluding, in Britain, those privileges of that religion that is *"by law established"*) affirm that the law does not discriminate among religions, equal treatment, is, none the less, not guaranteed. Action affecting religious movements

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may be taken at official, but sub-political, levels to which neither the public at large, nor the victim in particular, have much access, and in the counsels of which they can exert virtually no influence. The recent treatment of a religious minority by the Charity Commissioners provides a case in point.

The Charity Commissioners cannot, of course, in any way directly determine the validity of the particular beliefs that men espouse, nor condemn the practices they pursue in the exercise of their religious freedom; but they do exert a perhaps quaint, indirect influence on religious freedom by virtue of their competence to decide about the charitable status of trusts. Religious movements may, indiscriminately, seek a variety of privileges at law. They may seek exemption of their premises from local rates, and—and this is the issue here—they may seek to have their trusts recognised as charitable, and so escape normal tax liabilities. The Charity Commissioners have considerable discretion with respect to the trusts they register; but religion is presumed at law to be *charitable*, and, if challenged, trustees have to establish to the satisfaction of the Charity Commissioners (or, beyond them, on appeal) that their purposes are religious; that they are not subversive of religion and morality; and that the operation of the trust will be in the public interest and for the public benefit. The Charity Commissioners have no power to revoke a trust, but they can refuse to register a trust. In a recent case, this is indeed what they did, following an unprecedented procedure in which the Commissioners authorised a quasi-judicial enquiry into the religious movement concerned—the group known as the Exclusive Brethren.

THE EXCLUSIVE BRETHREN is the name given (by outsiders) to the so-called Plymouth Brethren who, in the mid-19th century, joined John Nelson Darby (1800–82) in the creation of a Christian fellowship based on strict biblical principles. The term "exclusive" was applied because these brethren maintained that it was essential for those who believed in "the Truth" to separate from all others, and to admit to their "breaking of bread" only those who agreed in all doctrinal matters, and who subjected themselves to the same social and moral discipline. The Brethren movement began in the late 1820s, when Darby, then an Anglican clergyman in the Church of Ireland, began meeting with others who had serious doubts about the validity of Anglican orders, and, indeed about the biblical warrant for any sort of clerical class. The group included several clergymen and students preparing for orders, and among other converts there were professional men, some landed gentry, and military officers.

The "Plymouth Brethren" split in the 1840s, when Darby and his associates separated from other founders on the question of the "closed table" and the exclusion from the fellowship of other self-professed Christians whose doctrines and practices differed. The governing principle of their fellowship was the biblical injunction to separate themselves from evil. The exclusive party, although never a large movement had assemblies throughout England and Scotland, with some meetings in France, Switzerland, and Germany (where Darby had been a vigorous evangelist), and in the United States, West Indies, Canada, and other parts of the English-speaking world.

This sect—unfortunately, a term that is offensive to members but which, in common usage, is warranted—has continued with little public notice until recent decades (although Darby's theological writings on the second advent and biblical prophecy, collectively known as "Dispensationalism" have exerted wide influence among fundamentalists of various denominations). The Brethren suffered a series of schisms in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which were the occasions for anguish and bitterness. They arose from the rigour with which the command to separate from evil was applied. Separation from those who committed evil also entailed separation from those who, although not initially convicted of evil or false doctrine themselves, persisted in associating with those who were. The consequences, particularly since decisions were made independently within each local assembly, were sometimes ramifying and even confused schism; and Darby, in his later years, found himself much and repeatedly exercised in attempting to define the lines of legitimate fellowship.

THAT THE BRETHREN have in the past been prone to schism does not, in itself, concern us, and despite these divisions a clear line of descent can be traced from those in fellowship with Darby through a line of successors to the present day. To distinguish this fellowship from other schismatic groups, it was usually known by the names of its leaders, and particularly by the name of the leader at the time of the most recent division. The group of Brethren whose affairs are at issue here, and undoubtedly the largest continuing body of Brethren in the exclusive tradition in Britain, are often known as "Taylorites", since James Taylor Jr was their leader on the occasion of the last two schisms in their history (in 1959 and 1970). Their opponents, who do not now represent an organised fellowship of the same strength, and many of whom are dispersed, are known as "anti-Taylorites."

Schism within a movement brings problems about the ownership of property, and it is often

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manifested in divisions within families that were formerly united in the one fellowship. Both consequences ensued among the Brethren in their various schisms. The schisms of 1959 and 1970 occurred as the distinctive ethical stance of the fellowship was vigorously reasserted, particularly in the injunction to keep themselves separate from the world. Social conditions had changed, and the traditional separatist ethic had now to be applied to issues which the leadership regarded as new perils. Dissension followed, and schism occurred. Such things as television had come into use in the wider society and among some Brethren. Now the fellowship was enjoined to eschew it in the spirit of their original ethic (which had always prohibited theatre- and cinema-going). Membership of various organisations such as professional bodies and students' unions had come to be enforced in the wider society; and the call was now made for Brethren to consider whether they could be involved in these associations without contravening the scriptural injunction not to be "unequally yoked" with unbelievers. Sharing a dwelling with non-Brethren had always been contrary to the group's norms; but in the 1960s this principle was extended to the avoidance of sharing a front door (in an apartment building), and the injunction against "commensality with outsiders" was reasserted. These interdictions may be regarded as attempts to reinforce existing principles in changing social circumstances.

Some members of the fellowship felt the reassertion of these demands as a hardship, even though there was widespread compliance: for example, of some 28 pharmacists, all but one gave up their pharmaceutical practice when the House of Lords declined to permit qualified professionals to practice unless they continued to remain enrolled members of the Pharmaceutical Society. Those who remained in fellowship saw the struggle as the purging of the fellowship of laxness with respect to the cardinal principle on which the Brethren had historically and recurrently taken their stand—the separation from evil.

YEARS BEFORE the Brethren divided into "open" and "exclusive" fellowships, the obligation to separate from evil had been unequivocally demanded as the primary duty of a Christian—whether in remaining aloof from the world; in avoiding all other associations; or in withdrawing from any brother who has lapsed into immoral habits or who has espoused false doctrine. From the beginning, the fellowship had maintained itself as a sanctified community, apart from the world and the churches. The recurrent difficulty was the correction of Brethren who fell into worldly ways or who taught erroneous doctrine. When such a case occurs, the Brethren first seek to correct the erring brother. The Brethren all recognise that they are capable of falling into error and of committing sin. Usually, minor matters of misconduct are easily corrected with the help of other members. When there is persistent wrongdoing or false doctrine, the local assembly becomes concerned, and if the case cannot be resolved by rebuke, then an unrepentant individual is said to be "shut up", a term used to indicate that he is not admitted to the Brethren's meetings, and in particular to the meeting for the "breaking of bread." One who fails to repent is then "withdrawn from" or "put out", and any brother who fails so to dissociate himself from the unrepentant himself becomes subject to being withdrawn from.

In the 19th century, differences on doctrinal matters led to divisions within assemblies; and the Brethren came to accept that there might be periodic need for a process which was described as *"the assembly purges itself."* The discipline required in putting out those who had committed evil came to be seen as in itself a reassertion of the true faith of the fellowship, and little as such a measure might be appreciated by outsiders, it was well understood, by all those who committed themselves to the fellowship, as something unfortunate but essential to the maintenance of its purity. None the less, the renewed vigour with which, in the 1950s and '60s, the principles of purity were reasserted, gave rise to tensions and divisions within congregations and within families.

Division within families is a subject that can be quickly elevated into a matter of general public concern. The Brethren are not the only religious movement to have been subjected in recent years to considerable abuse and misrepresentation by the mass media because family members differ on matters of religious belief. Most of the cases which the media take up are of young individuals who are recruited to some little-known but demanding religious fellowship; but the case of the Brethren is rather different. They withdraw from any one of their number who is failing, in one way or another, to maintain the standards accepted by the religious fellowship to which he has belonged.

In the early 1960s, the press made much of the divisions among the Brethren, recounting, in exaggerated form, instances of families divided about such matters as television, and of young people whose families would no longer eat with them at the same table. Some of those who were "put out" wrote to their MPs, who asked questions in Parliament, and some of whom urged that James Taylor Jr (an American) not be allowed to visit the fellowship in Britain. Nothing was done. Following the schism of 1970, the anti-Taylorites again opened the campaign against the Brethren, and, in a more effective, if less public, strategy, complained to the Charity Commissioners, and so to the Attorney-General.

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THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL of the day, through Standing Counsel, decided to undertake a quasi-judicial enquiry, using the Charity Commissioners to summon evidence about the affairs of the Brethren. Neither the Attorney-General nor the Commissioners could interfere with the actual religious practices of the Brethren, of course, but they could form a view of whether the trusts created by the Brethren had a religious purpose. Mr Hugh Francis, Q.C., was given the task of undertaking the enquiry and reporting on the Brethren. He reported in November 1975, and he drew on evidence supplied principally by anti-Taylorites. He did not see the need to make a definitive finding on matters of fact—and, indeed, one may doubt the competence of legal procedures to do that. He did not interview the correspondents who supplied him with written evidence, nor did he seek to elicit the response of those who remained in the fellowship by putting these complaints to them. The evidence was submitted without cross-examination of those who had supplied it. The Report was thus not intended to test the truth of the allegations: it was offered as "an opinion of counsel." Mr Francis concluded that, in his opinion, the teachings and practices of the Brethren were contrary to public policy, and he subsequently appeared on television to say that their teachings were likely to cause distress and unhappiness.

The Charity Commissioners regarded the report as inconclusive. While they were not convinced that the Brethren's doctrines on such matters as separation from evil should influence charitable status, the action that they did take had the effect of creating great difficulties in the normal conduct of the sect's affairs. The Commissioners decided to approve no more schemes for dealing with property affected by the schism, and to accept no further registration of charitable trusts. The Brethren's freedom to worship as they chose was unimpaired by this decision; but it did seriously impede the administrative activities of the movement on which their effective religious freedom in some measure depended. The Commissioners' difficulties in deciding how to deal with existing trusts that were at issue in congregations affected by schism can be readily appreciated. The reasons for refusing to register new trusts is much less clear.

That decision appears to be questionable on two grounds. First, if the Exclusive Brethren were sustaining principles that they had maintained in the past, it seems unreasonable to suggest that, whereas before the schism they were entitled to be deemed a religious movement competent to register charitable trusts, after the schism they were no longer to be so regarded. Second, if the Brethren were now held to be engaging in activities or practices that were subversive of religion or morality, or not in the public interest, then the question that arises is whether those practices were unique in religious history and unparalleled among other religious movements that had registered trusts, or that might do so.

To test whether there were grounds on which the Charity Commissioners or the Attorney-General might refuse the registration of a trust, the Brethren brought an action that was heard in February 1981. The action required the Attorney-General to consider whether the trust that the Brethren sought to register was invalid and not charitable because the movement was "not a religion", or was "subversive of all religion and morality", or was "not in the public interest." The case was heard before Mr Justice Walton, and the Solicitor-General appeared for the Attorney-General.

IN THE EVENT, the Solicitor-General produced no evidence to suggest that the Brethren's teachings and practices did not constitute a religion, and indeed—given the Brethren's commitment to biblical authority, their attempt to regulate their lives according to biblical requirements, and the institution of acts of worship commanded in the Bible—it would have been difficult, without impugning almost all, if not all, Christian churches and sects, to have done so. At an early stage of the plaintiff's evidence, the Solicitor-General went further, and conceded that the sect was not subversive of religion and morality. None of the evidence on which the Charity Commissioners had decided to refuse registration of the Brethren's trusts was offered to contest this proposition. The case proceeded solely on the question of whether the trust which the Brethren sought to register was for the public benefit.

Until the Solicitor-General conceded these issues, in effect it was the religion of the Brethren that was on trial. Although the case hung on the matter of a trust, the ultimate, if not the immediately admissible, questions that the court addressed were (a) whether the Brethren's beliefs and practices constituted a religion, and (b) whether they were subversive of religion and morality. Had they decided that they did not constitute a religion, the apparent effect would have been to disallow the registration of a trust, which would have affected the ownership and use of all the Meeting Rooms of the movement. It would have affected liability to pay rates; and the income of the trusts could have been made liable to taxation. But the wider ramification of such a decision on the equal freedom of religious movements would have been incalculable. Among religions (once the court has determined that they are indeed religions) the law does not discriminate, and earlier cases, among them a trust created by the followers of Joanna Southcott, have established that as long as a trust

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is religious it is valid as a charity, even if the purpose is deemed to be foolish.

THE LAW PRESUMES that a religion—any religion—is for the public benefit, and the test of whether the public interest is served appears to be whether the religionists engage in activities for the promotion of their beliefs among a wider public. In earlier cases, *enclosed* orders have been deemed to be *not* for the public benefit because these orders undertake no such public promotion of their gospel. What now had to be shown was that the Brethren did engage in public preaching; that they did admit outsiders to their meetings (other than to the meeting for the breaking of bread and to administrative meetings); that the complaints concerning divisions in families related (the occasion of schism apart) to rare instances; and that the Brethren as individuals comported themselves in ways conducive to good citizenship and public order. Over and above all this, it might also have been shown that, in respect of their beliefs and practices, and in particular their policy concerning separation from evil and withdrawal from evildoers, the Brethren have not been by any means unique.

Apart from the evidence of a number of people who had encountered the Brethren either as neighbours, as teachers of their children, or in business, and who testified to their upright conduct, the evidence which the court heard, respecting preaching, admission to meetings, and family divisions, was entirely the testimony of the Brethren themselves. The Solicitor-General cited none of the complaints on which the Charity Commissioners had acted, and which had occasioned all this litigation. At least to the non-lawyer, it must occasion surprise that in effect no justification for a serious quasi-legal decision by a government agency was offered. Ultimately, the indications are those of a tacit acknowledgment that the Charity Commissioners were mistaken and, in being mistaken, had been guilty of an injustice. Beyond this, however, the case also indicates that extreme reluctance of politicians (since the defendants were political officers) to fight on religious issues, and their ultimate conviction that religion is of very little social consequence.

NON-LAWYERS APPEAR to have been not the only ones to be surprised at the absence of any effort to justify the Commissioners' decision, however. In his judgment, Mr Justice Walton commented pointedly that the evidence had been "all one way." He did not conceal his own opinion of the Brethren. While they separated themselves from the world, they were "quite content to earn wages as employees"; and they suffered "from the Pharisaical position of being blown up with their own pride, believing that they and only they have the key to all revealed truth. . . ." Twice, his Lordship remarked that the evidence of the plaintiffs had not been challenged by the Solicitor-General, and therefore he must accept it. All the evidence respecting discipline came from the Brethren, he observed, "and it may very well put the matter in a much more favourable light than it wears in reality." Referring to discipline and the division of families, his Lordship said:

> "One cannot . . . as a man of the world, avoid knowing that very serious allegations indeed have been made against the Brethren in connection with these matters. These have not been in evidence before me. I, therefore, am not entitled to pay judicially any regard to them. The Attorney-General through the Solicitor-General had taken no point upon the matter, and, therefore, I am forced to accept what is there stated as being the only evidence in front of me."

Just why the evidence was "all one way" is a matter of speculation. Perhaps the complaints on which the Charity Commissioners had acted were now deemed insufficiently substantial to put forward; or perhaps the government officers preferred not to fight the "religious battle" which, from his comments, the judge appeared disappointed to have been denied.

THERE WAS, HOWEVER, other evidence on matters of religious discipline of a comparative kind, which did not come from the Brethren, and which the plaintiffs had been prepared to present, but which the Solicitor-General had been unwilling to hear, and which (early in the case) his Lordship had also been disinclined to admit. The opportunity was missed to hear matter which pertained to the larger issue of religious freedom, which might have put the case of the Brethren into a wider comparative perspective, and which would have established that, in the question of discipline, the Brethren did not differ in principle from a number of other sects. If all the evidence came from the Brethren, it did so only because the Court had preferred not to be burdened with comparative evidence about other religions, which the judge had dismissed with a reference to "dancing round a totem pole." One need not, however, bracket the Brethren with primitive peoples in order to place their own practices in a broader context which might enlighten the seemingly obscure state of the law on matters of this kind.

The exhortation to spiritual purity goes back to the Judaic roots of Christianity, and is symbolised in a variety of ritual and social acts. The avoidance

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of contamination may require that certain foods be tabooed; that particular places be shunned; that ritual washing or baptism occur; that certain language be prescribed or proscribed; or, in sects that have transformed purely symbolic gestures into practical moral guidance, that circumspection be maintained about the company that one keeps.

In "separating from evil", the Brethren follow, in a practical way, an exhortation that is widely enjoined in religion. The injunction to maintain purity has always had greatest cogency for minority religions. Among Christians in general, the injunction of *I Corinthians 6: 17* and *Hebrews 7: 26* had greatest force when they were a small and persecuted minority in an alien world, in which they could see themselves as spiritual inheritors of the claims once made for Jews, namely to be sons of God, joint-heirs with Christ. But once Christians had become the majority, the command to "be separate" lost its force, and it was only when protesting and reforming Puritan or evangelical or fundamentalist groups re-emerged that the demand was reasserted in its full vigour.

Such movements arose in societies that were, nominally, virtually completely Christian: in consequence, those from whom they saw themselves enjoined in Scriptures to "separate" themselves were the nominally Christian community at large and the Church into which it was organised. In that Church, they found plenty to characterise as evil and corrupt, and, on examination, many of its practices could be shown to be quite unscriptural. Since the Church appeared to be deceiving men with respect to their religious duties, it came to symbolise the most profound evil of all.

CHRISTIAN SEPARATISTS have practised "putting out" for centuries. They have called it by various names —withdrawal; disfellowshipping; disowning; banning; shunning. Catholics called it excommunication. Despite the practice of excommunication, churchmen have sometimes complained about the rigour of sectarian discipline and separation. Thus, Bishop Grindal of London complained in the late 16th century that Puritans refused to admit, not only other Anglicans, but even other non-separated Puritans to their services. The position taken by these early Congregationalists was essentially similar to that which, in more recent times, has been adopted by the Brethren, who believe that only those who act together in separating from evil properly constitute a fellowship.

Putting out the evil person is intended to be purificatory for the community rather than punitive for the individual, whose repentance and restoration is the express prayer of the congregation. Among the Brethren, ungodly activity and false doctrine are occasions for discipline, and since all male brothers are free to expound the Scriptures, and are expected to do so, the maintenance of pure doctrine has been a prime concern, and has necessitated discipline. Working to similar effect in bringing disciplinary measures into operation has been the exigent need in changing times to reassert received principles with respect to moral demeanour.

This concern with regulation bears comparison with the traditional requirements of the Roman Catholic orders—even though (since, in an order, celibacy is maintained) the moral problems peculiar to the family, and the difficulties of family divisions, do not arise. Restrictions in recreation, and on association with outsiders; a required measure of dedication; and the acceptance of a rule of discipline, all are common to the Roman order and to the Brethren, who, in some respects, are not unlike monks, living, within the wider society, lives of intense religious virtuosity.

In putting out the wayward, the Brethren do what the 17th-century Quakers did. They, too, required members to consult the meeting before moving house away from the locality of one assembly into that of another. (The Quakers even required that a man consult the meeting before taking a spouse.) Those of "disorderly walk" were disowned. The Mennonites exercise a ban *(Meidung)* on those who become too involved in worldly association, and that ban operates within families. A Mennonite would not eat a meal with anyone who had been banned, and it has been the practice that if one of two spouses was excommunicated in this way, normal relations between them ceased. The principle, enjoined by the Schleitheim Confession of 1527, was reiterated in the Dortrecht Confession of 1632. Menno Simons himself repeated the rule in the words of *I Corinthians 5: 11*:

> "not to associate with any one who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of immorality or greed, or is an idolator, reviler, drunkard, or robber—not even to eat with such a one." (Revised Version)

The Methodists (who were not even separatists) developed a stringent set of moral requirements, and in the early 19th century individual Methodists were disowned for such things as disorderly walk, frivolous talk, whistling, and improper dress, at a time when the Methodist Conference devoted its time to stipulating such matters as, for example, the proper length of petticoats. Of contemporary sects which operate with similar rules of separation, one need mention only the Christadelphians and Jehovah's Witnesses, neither of which has fallen foul of the Charity Commissioners with respect to the rigour of their religious practices.

THESE CASES provide evidence of the practice of discipline entirely comparable to that exercised by

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the Brethren, in movements that have been, or in some cases are still, committed to the ideal of separation from the world. On any definition, they are religions; and, on existing precedents, none of them would have difficulty in registering trusts for purposes deemed religious and in the public interest. All of these groups have suffered, at times, from public and press opprobrium, perhaps because the morally indifferent often feel that moral rigour is itself an infringement of personal liberty. Yet, that a movement maintains standards and expels the wayward is scarcely a justification for the denial of its normal rights of religious freedom, or its right to operate on equal terms with other religious bodies.

HERE, THEN, is the "missing evidence" concerning the significance of discipline. A sect is always a voluntary body. Its members select themselves, and the leaders may exercise only very limited sanctions over their members. The sect's operation and its discipline are, in practice, always matters for general consent. As long as a movement and its leaders operate within the framework of the law, it must be accepted that members commit themselves voluntarily to certain standards of behaviour and to consequences for departing from those standards. Within the law—and it is rare that there is transgression of the law within any religious movement—the limit of a community's sanctions against a dissident member is to expel him; and expulsion is a common method of social control in a wide variety of human organisation, from clubs, military units, and professional associations to preparatory schools.

ALL OF THIS does not diminish the fact that discipline is a serious matter for the sectarian himself, and particularly so in a movement in which members are closely drawn together and separated from outsiders. Such, of course, is the case with the Brethren.

When a member is put out, anguish is certainly occasioned—for *all* those concerned. It is a severe sentence, even when considered in purely social terms, since such a member may lose the association of all his family and friends. When to this is added the spiritual seriousness with which fellowship is regarded, it is clear why passion is so readily engendered. Yet, given their interpretation of evil, and their obligation to separate themselves from it, such procedures, harrowing as they are for everyone, appear to the Brethren to be unavoidable. If obedience to God, and to the way of life which manifests such obedience, is the first obligation of Brethren, transcending all social, including familial, obligations, then family divisions will inevitably occur. In taking this ground, the Brethren recall such texts as *Luke 14: 26*:

> "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life, also, he cannot be my disciple";

and *Luke 12: 52–3*:

> "... there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father, and mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother...."

This is the testimony, not merely of the Brethren, but of that Jesus whom all Christians claim to follow.

The Brethren presented abundant evidence of their own to put the matter of discipline into perspective, and outsiders may also confirm that, in normal circumstances, family life among them is characterised by bonds of the strongest affection. Sects generally attach great importance to the quality and the sanctity of family relationships, and of no sect is this more fully the case than it is of the Brethren, who are diligent and conscientious parents, and who maintain homes in which integrity, honesty, and the catalogue of traditional virtues remain paramount concerns. The restriction on their involvements with the wider society intensifies the affection of family ties. The tightness of their commitments, the separation of those who sustain them, and the vigilant exercise of discipline, and, ultimately, the expulsion of those who do not fit, are all of a piece, and are necessary to each other.

The unquestioned freedom in Western society to maintain a distinctive, serious, and conscientious way of life, as long as the rights of others are not thereby invaded, should not be less than the very evident contemporary freedom to maintain an utterly frivolous and uncaring life. In the courts, the Brethren have fought and now won this implicit democratic right.

But why should they ever have had to fight at all?

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# *POINTS OF THE COMPASS*

*Letter from Fort Worth*

# Un-Metropolis: Cowtown, Today

*By Jan Morris*

DECIDEDLY *NOT* the thing to do is to wake up on a Sunday morning in downtown Fort Worth and look out of your hotel window toward the north. Unnerving indeed is the prospect before you then. There stands the old courthouse, presently under reconstruction so that half its windows are gaping and all its clocks are stopped, and there is the grim, yellowish block of the Tarrant County Jail, with the criminal court conveniently attached. The streets are deserted but for one or two maundering vagrants, and the business premises look all too basically Texan: Luskey's Western Store, Engler's Western Wear, the Plaza Finance office and a couple of bond guarantors.

A lifeless river wanders hangdog through this cheerless scene; there is a wooded bluff of sorts over to the right, beyond the Kangaroo Court Bar-B-Q; dominating the middle distance are the four bleak chimneys of the Texas Electric Service Company. And beyond it all a wide, straight boulevard strikes northward, through a wasteland of jerry-building, toward the illimitable prairie horizon all around, which is punctuated only by radio masts, water towers, and occasional grain elevators.

You are looking at the Texasest view in the Texasmost city of them all. Down there beside the Trinity River the West really did begin. "The prospect from this plateau", wrote Colonel John Forney some twenty years after the foundation of the town, "is grand beyond description"—not least, he thought, the vista it afforded of distant lofty mountains, "to be barely distinguished from the clouds themselves." Stagecoach travellers were taken from their hotels to wonder at the view from that bluff; and as the cattle trails converged upon the infant settlement, as the railways arrived and the profits began to burgeon, many a pioneer on his way to California was persuaded to change his mind and try his luck in this, the best-located, fastest-growing, farthest-seeing, highest-spirited, handsomest young municipality in the West.

"Good God", you may say, "what happened?" But wait: the real point of that drear spectacle from the window is not the courthouse or the jail or even the historic bluff (and certainly not the lofty mountains, which nobody but Colonel Forney has ever seen) but that broad highway leading away to the flatlands over the river. For there is no big city of my experience more rootedly regional, more organically unmetropolitan than Fort Worth, Texas—where on a windy day, they assure me, the prairie tumbleweed still blows helter-skelter into town off IH 20.

So let's get downtown over with. Even on the ground, even facing south, even on a weekday, it still makes the heart sink rather. Once it was full of native gusto, in the days when Hell's Half Acre offered a perpetual jamboree of sex, booze, and gamble, when Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid holed up here between exploits, when the town marshal was the murderous Long Hair Jim Courtwright, and the emergent cattle barons swanked about the saloons with cigars to match their egos. Even when I first came here, 30 years ago, it struck me as a wonderfully self-confident provincial city, secure in its own traditions—*the* city to hundreds of thousands of West Texans, where they came to do their Christmas shopping at Monnig's, to eat their Sunday brunch at the stately Texas Hotel, to catch a movie in a downtown picture palace or board a train at the sumptuous art deco depot of the Texas & Pacific.

Today the downtown city, between the temporarily courtless courthouse and the permanently trainless railroad station, is sadly short of the old spunk. The conviction is gone. It seems to me an oddly half-speed, half-hearted, half-cocked place; and even its clutch of new high-rise buildings somehow suggests an urban centre numbed by some interminable national holiday, or permanently out of season. Butch Cassidy wouldn't come near the place now, and old Long Hair would be bored to tears.

They are trying to revitalise it, of course, but the skyscrapers and complexes still going up are no more than a yawn of belated urban renewal—



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those inescapable glass-sheathed towers, that statutory Gallerian ice rink, the inevitable Hyatt flamboyances inserted like some crazed transplant into the metabolism of the poor old Texas Hotel. Tarted-up Victoriana creeps inexorably along Main Street, which is soon to be served by imitation trolley cars with drivers in Western attire. In the open space, mostly car parks, that fronts the vast Tarrant County Convention Center a lonely brick one-storey building, old enough perhaps to remember Hell's Half Acre on this very spot, remains to register a silent protest about it all. "Ernest McGhee and His Showband", large scrawled letters on its wall say, like a message left by a dying man upon some ravaged beach. "$1."

THIS IS NOT JUST the usual neurosis of the American city centre. Fort Worth's civic condition is specific to itself. When I came here first, this town seemed altogether independent, self-sufficient, and, indeed, self-satisfied; but for years now it has been living not so much under the shadow as in the dazzle of Dallas, Big D, 30 miles along the freeway and glamorised alike by political assassination and television folktale. The creation of the mammoth Dallas-Fort Worth Airport sealed the cities in the uneasy megalopolis they call "Metroplex", and the initials *DFW*, attached to airline baggage across the world, stamped upon the contemporary consciousness the impression that the two places were more or less one, with Dallas emphatically on top.

Poor Fort Worth! Even alphabetically it was at a disadvantage. If only it had been christened Camp Worth, or Bunker Worth, or even Armoury Worth, those luggage-label initials would have been reversed, and things might have been different. As it was, the investment counsellors, the multinationals, the Beautiful People, and the Authentic Yunnan Restaurants followed the shine to Big D, leaving downtown Fort Worth, long deprived of its lascivious allure, ever drabber and duller. No wonder the developers looked to their properties, the architects to their modish malls.

Too late! What we see today in downtown Fort Worth, still in the throes of its renewal, is the recreation of a grand old town in the image of everywhere else. There is nothing more exciting around than the Fort Worth Water Gardens, which suggest to me a monkey house unexpectedly inundated by the bursting of a hundred thousand water mains, nothing more beautiful than the svelte city buses and the elegant new traffic lights; and one of the few establishments to stay open 24 hours a day is the Municipal Fines Bureau.

Do not despair, though. Drive to the north along Main Street, between the recently installed gas-style street lamps and the lately rebricked sidewalks, and you will find that in a matter of moments it leaves the downtown grid altogether, becoming that wide northbound boulevard you saw on Sunday morning; and it leads you straight to Cowtown.

FIGURATIVELY AND PHYSICALLY it takes you there. Once past the courthouse, Main Street, if unprepossessing in appearance, turns out to be full of varied life. There are gas stations and tattoo artists and Mexican foods "to go"; there are rubber-stamp manufacturers and used-tyre dealers and off to the right is Joe T. Garcia's famous restaurant, an island of crooked clapboard in a sea of expensive cars; and before long there begin to appear the shambled wooden structures of Cowtown proper, North Fort Worth. There you should stop, switch off your engine, and open the window. If you are lucky (and imaginative) you will hear some magical sounds upon the air and smell some evocative smells: the lowing of cattle, the shouting of pig men and cowboys, the noble tang of sweat and leather, dung and hay, cow and quarter horse and Texas hog.

The stockyards are not as I remembered them. North Fort Worth is partly tourism nowadays (FOAT WUTH, AH LUV YEW!, "*Happy Hour at the Bare Back Saloon Featuring Texas Babes*"). It is partly dereliction (disintegrated cattle sheds, disused railway tracks, shattered warehouses like *Reichstag* ruins). But it is partly active Cowtown still. Among the steakhouses and the souvenir shops you may still find lodging houses the cowboys have always frequented—the Alps Hotel, for instance, named perhaps by Colonel Forney. Among the vast expanses of pens and sheds, once jammed every day with meat on the hoof for the nearby packing-houses, two mornings a week there are still a few score cattle up for sale, to the immemorial dirge of the auctioneers and the changeless twitch of finger, jerk of chin, of the ranchers sprawled around. "Yeah, same old smell", a cowhand responded when I commented on the stockyard ambience. "Not so much of it, but jest as fragrant."

Saturday night is the time to go to North Fort Worth, for that is rodeo night. The coliseum then is a riot of Texana, tumbling infants in ten-gallon hats, popcorn in mighty containers, cantering horses, frantic calves, creased farm faces and ever-booming commentary: "And let's give a round of applause ladies an' gen'lemen to a very fine group of visitors we've got with us tonight from Stuttgart, Germany, forty-five fine gen'lemen from Germany visiting with us at the Fort Worth Rodeo tonight. . . ." Outside, the dark streets are full of cowboys and horses, tall slouched figures stalking under the streetlights, the snort and

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whinny of tethered animals, the clip-clop of hooves and the drawl of rodeo gossip. And when the show is over everyone goes around the corner to Billy Bob's Texas, "the biggest honky-tonk in the world", where the 43 dim-lit bars are soon clogged with Texan buttocks, where lanky Texan shoulders drape earnestly over the massed pool tables, and where on the transcendentally illuminated dance floor a million dancers sway and swoop exuberantly through the revolving lights, cheek to cheek or elbows high, as only Texans can.

WHEN YOU LEAVE Billy Bob's the strains of country-and-western pursue you remorselessly home. They pursue you indeed everywhere in Fort Worth, for in a generic sense this whole city is Cowtown still. The trains may no longer bring their cattle to those stockyard sidings, but their whistles still sound splendidly through the Fort Worth night; and their shapes are as inescapable in this prairie town as ships in a seaport, hulking at the ends of side streets or chugging back and forth at highway crossings, while ever and again there labours gloriously across the city one of the great Burlington Northern coal trains, six bulky units out in front. a mile of trucks behind.

Hoboes still ride those trains out of Fort Worth, just as urchins fish for catfish almost in the shadow of the courthouse. The humour of this town is bucolically sly and pawky, the prevailing philosophy homespun, and the public taste—or so it strikes me—fundamentally wholesome. When the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* conducted a poll to discover "149 Things We Most Like About Fort Worth", the list included hamburgers in Rick's Lockeroom and the view of St Stephen Presbyterian Church from McCart Avenue.

The pull of rural America is tenacious here, and the city's country roots have never been broken. After the cattle sale one morning I decided to follow one of the purchasers home to see where his cattle would end up. There was a clutter of farmers paying their cheques at the stockyard office, or exchanging professional advice ("You look out now up the intersection, I never saw so many highway patrolmen in my life." "Jeez, an' I ain't got no sticker for that danged trailer"), so I settled upon Mr Lloyd Tabor, who had bought a couple of Shorthorns, and presently followed him out along the highway home.

I was well instructed how to get there. All along the way, helpful informants directed me. Up the intersection I went, keepin' my eyes open, out the Decatur highway, turned off the main road, down past that Mount Zion Baptist Church, took a left away up there along the dirt road, followed out along Route 2 a coupla miles, and quicker'n a jackass jump I was at the Tabor ranch in a very exhibition of back-country America, the trees green in the gully, the bluebonnets smiling on the verges all around, the birds all a-singing in the Texas sky, and Mr Tabor's new Shorthorns already grazing there behind his house like cows in a sentimental calendar.

LONG AGO COWTOWN grew extremely rich: after cattle came oil, and it became a city of millionaires. "Scores of the best men in the country", B. B. Paddock wrote in the 1870s, "are coming to . . . Fort Worth, and we are going to work with energy and determination to build up the place." They succeeded beyond Paddock's most visionary dreams. Out of one enterprise alone, the Tandy leather and electronics business, at least fifty millionaires were spawned; and today, for all the city's acres of modest clapboard, its thousands of illegally-immigrated Mexicans, its unemployed blacks, and its ever-visible community of layabouts, Fort Worth is awash with money. Now, as always, it is a place for big and brawny initiatives: it deals in brawny commodities, like bulls; it manufactures big things, like military aircraft; and it goes the whole hog in the making of fortunes. The very rich, who used to build gaudy downtown mansions, prefer now to live less ostentatiously in the discreet plushy suburb called Westover Hills; and over their homes each day, like reminders of mortality, the huge black B-52 bombers, Fort Worth born and bred, ominously come and go.

Immortality, though, has been more of a preoccupation among the Fort Worth millionaires. Out of all that wealth has come an oligarchy of families inescapable in the affairs of this town, a mighty plutocracy that sprang from the soil of Tarrant County and was to nurture not just the cattle barons, but the property dukes and the oil rig princes. Waggoner, Tandy, Kimbell, Bass, Carter—their names are everywhere, in street and parks, in office blocks and memorial stadiums, in museums and university halls and water gardens. Often they have married each other, sometimes they have joined each others' boards, and lately they have even been mutually sculpted—Electra Biggs, née Waggoner, is a distinguished sculptor (besides having the Buick *Electra* named for her).

Turn where you will in Fort Worth and the plutocracy is somewhere there. In the past, I suppose, its members were united in skulduggery too, like many another provincial cabal—they used to say the town was run by the Seventh Street Gang, centred upon the Fort Worth Club and the adjacent *Star-Telegram* office. But they were also intensely proud of their city and jealous of its reputation. Immortality to them was immortality in Fort Worth, and so over the years they bequeathed to their hometown a tremendous series

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of memorials.

Around a wide green sufficiently to the west of Main Street, away out there beyond Montgomery Ward and the First United Methodist Church, these hierarchic monuments are distributed like mausoleums in some Valley of the Tycoons: the Kimbell Art Museum, the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, the Museum of Science and History, the Forth Worth Art Museum—all of them built, sustained, or embellished with the old family cash of Cowtown. No Medicis ever embellished a Florence more lavishly. This is claimed to be "the finest group of museums west of the Mississippi", and the Kimbell Art Museum, which was Louis Kahn's last work, seems to me not only a beautiful art gallery but one of the loveliest buildings of any kind built in our time—a structure that, in its exquisite blend of simplicity and opulence, has brought glory to the name of Kimbell and turned the prairie dirt to gold. "That Kimbell was a funny guy", observed a local senior citizen of my acquaintance. "Who'd have thought he'd live forever?" You could say the same about Cheops. "Ah", the senior citizen retorted, "but that Cheops, he was from out of town."

THIS IS NOT AT ALL a subservient or sycophantic place, as metropolises tend to be. On the contrary, it strikes me as essentially patrician in its attitudes—Kimbell or Cheops, where's the odds? "We depend heavily on the odd-ball trade", the owner of Barber's Book Store told me, by which I think he meant the congenital nonconformists, the ornery and the original—in a word, the gentry.

As it happens, I spent one whole day bumping into members of this tenacious Fort Worth élite, who are the truest guardians of the city's character. In the morning I met a hobo couple living in a tarpaulin shack in a thicket near the railway tracks. Their style was nothing if not dukely, and they greeted me with great courtesy, repeatedly offering me swigs of moonshine from their plastic jug, introducing me to their fine cat Tiger, and telling me about the raccoons that came to share their victuals after dark—he propped back on his chair with his feet up beneath the trees, she dancing here and there about that less-than-magic glade like a plump, Indianified, and rather sozzled nymph. Were they happy? I asked as I left. "Very, very happy. Happy as the day is long. Wanna bit of catfish?"

Then in the afternoon I talked to Amon Carter, Jr, son of the old magnate and himself a tycoon in good standing, publisher of the *Star-Telegram*, bigwig of the Texas Rangers, director of American Airlines. Like the hoboes, he talked genially, fluently, and at random: about a new recruit for the Rangers ("real nice, and he looks like a gen'leman"), about his father ("a great salesman, that's what Dad was"), about the expansion of Fort Worth ("this Sunbelt thing"), about *Dallas* on TV ("J.R. was raised right here in Fort Worth"), about what happened when the medical inspector of Krakow conducted an autopsy in Fort Worth ("he'd never taken out a bullet before, and never opened up a black man—'Why', he says, 'he's just the same inside as a white man' ").

And in the evening, Kenneth L. Wickett, independent oil operator and irrepressible poet. Him I encountered in the old-school grocery store of Turner & Dingee, established 1878, whose octogenarian owner, Mr Lloyd Hallaran, distinctly remembers taking supplies of squab to the hospitable whorehouses of the old downtown. Mr Wickett, who is small, perky, and charming, shops there every evening, and many of his aphoristic verses are tacked in typescript on the wall. For instance:

> *If only we could see ourselves as others see us,*
> *What a revelation it would be,*
> *Stripped of self-esteem and deluding hypocrisy,*
> *We would reveal stark reality.*

"He's a marvel", said Mr Hallaran, "the way he can just run them up."

"Why", added his sister, Nona, 86, who helps out in the shop, "he doesn't even have to think—they just come to him out of the air."

Mr Wickett smiled self-deprecatingly and gave me a copy of his most recent publication, *Dreams of Love*. Mr Hallaran gave me a slice of barbecued sausage and said I was to come back.

When I returned to my hotel there was a telephone call from Mr Amon Carter, Jr. "I've been thinking", said the millionaire, "and I don't want you to go away with the wrong idea in your head. You remember we were talking about *Dallas*? Well, I told you something wrong there. Weatherford, Texas, that's where J.R. was raised. He was born in Fort Worth but raised in Weatherford. I wouldn't want for you to get the wrong impression."

"Nearer Fort Worth than Dallas, anyway", I said.

"That's right", said Mr Carter with approval.

PATRICIANS EVERY ONE, such as you do not find in megalopolis: the railway-track tramps, the tycoon, the romantic poet, and the grocer too, some nicer than others, some more calculating, but all united in an easy, stylish generosity of manner. "The citizens", wrote Colonel Forney in 1872, "are kind, courteous and hospitable", and I agree with him. I don't want to gush, but in a lifetime of constant travel I have not met another populace so universally welcoming and delightful,

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so ready to oblige, so quick to help. Never was a view more deceptive than the unpromising downtown prospect from my window that Sunday morning.

There are those who say Fort Worth's is a vulnerable genius, that the example of Big D is sure to win in the end, overwhelm it with slickness and sophistication, metropolise it after all—and there is no denying that number 140 of those *Things We Like* was "Proximity of Dallas." But I doubt it; for the situation strikes me as an allegory of the American condition itself, its endless dialectic between habit and innovation, loyalty and change. Just as the principle of American perennially and unexpectedly survives the passing practice, so Fort Worth and all it represents is profounder than it seems. It will take more than admen's urbanity, computer cool, or even urban renewal to defeat the style of Cowtown.

They tell me that on a clear day in Fort Worth you can see the towers of Dallas, which are the towers of metropolitanism, and that sometimes the glow of its lights in the night tantalisingly illuminates the eastern sky; but I never noticed them, any more than I saw those cloud-capped Alps of Colonel Forney's.

# AUTHORS

**Ahdaf Soueif,** born in Egypt in 1950, studied at Cairo University and the University of Lancaster. "The Apprentice" will appear in a book of her short stories, *Aisha*, to be published in 1983 by Jonathan Cape.

**Norman Podhoretz,** editor of *Commentary* magazine in New York, is the author of *Doings and Undoings, Making It*, and a political memoir, *Breaking Ranks* (published in Britain by Weidenfeld, 1980). His most recent book is *Why We Were in Vietnam*. His article in this issue forms the introduction to a new edition of *The God That Failed*, to be published in the spring by Henry Regnery as a Gateway Books paperback.

**Peter Redgrove**'s latest volume of poems is *The Apple Broadcast* (Routledge, 1981).

**Geoffrey Grigson** has recently celebrated a half-century of writing with the simultaneous publication by Allison & Busby of his *Collected Poems 1963-80*, a poetry notebook—*The Private Art*—and a collection of his reviews and criticism, *Blessings, Kicks and Curses*.

**Roger Scruton** is Reader in Philosophy at Birkbeck College, London, and co-editor of the newly established journal, *The Salisbury Review*. His most recent books are *The Politics of Culture and Other Essays* (Carcanet Press) and *A Dictionary of Political Thought* (Macmillan).

**Georges Szirtes**' latest book of poems is *November and May* (Secker, 1982).

**Jacques Barzun** is literary adviser to Charles Scribner's Sons in New York, following his distinguished career as Professor of History at Columbia University, where he was from 1958-67 Dean of Faculties and Provost. His many and varied books include editions of Byron's and Berlioz's letters, works on race and music, a discussion of psycho-history, *Clio and the Doctors* (University of Chicago Press, 1974), and *Of Human Freedom* (Greenwood Press, 1978). His article comes from his new book, *A Stroll with William James*, to be published this spring by Harper & Row.

**Andrew Mango,** born in Istanbul in 1926, works as a broadcaster in London. He is the author of *Turkey* (Thames & Hudson, 1968), *Discovering Turkey* (Batsford, 1971), and *Turkey: A Delicately Poised Ally* (Sage, 1976). His conversation with Elie Kedourie, "The Middle East: Illusions, Great and Small", appeared in the September-October issue of ENCOUNTER.

**Gavin Ewart** has recently published *The New Ewart: Poems 1980 + 82* (Hutchinson).

**Malcolm Bradbury** is Professor of American Studies at the University of East Anglia. His novels include *Eating People is Wrong* (1959), *Stepping Westward* (1965), and *The History Man* (1975); his latest, *Rates of Exchange*, will be published by Secker & Warburg in April. Among his works of literary criticism are *The Social Context of Modern English Literature* (Blackwell, 1971) and *Possibilities: Essays on the State of the Novel* (Oxford University Press, 1973). "Struggling Westward" (of which the second part will appear in the February issue of ENCOUNTER) is developed from a lecture given in Venice to a meeting of the Italian Association for American Studies and extended in his forthcoming study, *The Modern American Novel* (Oxford University Press, 1983).

**John Mole**'s most recent book of poems is *Feeding the Lake* (Secker, 1981). He is co-editor of an anthology, *Poetry 1945-80*, to be published by Longman.

**Esmond Wright** is Director of the Institute of United States Studies and Professor of American History at London University. Among his publications is *Fabric of Freedom 1763-1800* (2nd ed., Macmillan, 1979).

**Jan Morris** published three new books in the autumn of 1982—*The Spectacle of Empire* (Faber), *A Venetian Bestiary* (Thames and Hudson) and *Wales: The First Place* (Aurum Press).

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# LETTERS

## Roosevelt's "Secret Agent"

MAY I SAY, involved as I was in the case, that I find Harvey Klehr's article on Josephine Adams (ENCOUNTER December 1982) to be quite accurate? The whole affair was bizarre, and is here explained for the first time. No doubt that Earl Browder was taken in, and would never admit that he had been duped.

Browder invited me to meet Josephine Adams, after he had given me an inkling of the story. I met her in his home in Yonkers. N.Y. I had taken the precaution to bring a recording machine, so the entire interview is on tape. She talked and talked. I went away puzzled, but with no firm conviction either way. Soon thereafter, she came to see me at my apartment in New York City. For the first time she struck me as slightly mad. A few days later, I received a telephone call from her. She said that she had to see me urgently because she had nowhere to sleep, had been adrift in the streets for a couple of days or so, had no money for food, and was being hunted by people who wanted to kill her. She appeared on my doorstep a half hour later. The lady's very appearance was wild, something out of *The Madwoman of Chaillot*. I listened patiently as she told me that a number of very well-known people, including Mrs Vanderbilt, had decided to murder her, for which reason she had escaped from the hospital. And she was hungry. Could I give her some money to get food? I recall giving her $10 and getting her to leave. I never saw her again. But that she was a victim of paranoia, there is no doubt.

The details in Klehr's article all strike me as accurate. Some of his surmises and the theorising go a bit far. Paranoia in its earlier stages is not so easy to detect. When I first interviewed Josephine Adams, she was composed and confident in her tale. Browder *wanted* to believe; later he could not bring himself to admit that he had been deceived. Once Adams' paranoia became wild, it was easy to wonder why anyone should have been taken in by it. Browder himself was a practical-minded, non-millennial character, not of the type suggested in Klehr's last two paragraphs.

THEODORE DRAPER

*Princeton*
*New Jersey*

## Show-Stoppers, Wash-Stoppers

I WAS SURPRISED that in Melvin J. Lasky's article on the curious respect that critics have shown for the confused historicity and ideology of the film *Reds* (ENCOUNTER, August) he seemed to be unaware that John Reed is not the "only" American to have the high honour—as Lasky points out that it seems to be accepted—of being buried in the Kremlin wall. On a recent visit to Moscow I saw in the wall the stone that marks the burial place of "Big Bill" Haywood. I have been told that C. E. Ruthenberg, one of the early leaders of the then fractured US Communist movement, is also buried there. (I have not confirmed this.)

I was surprised, too, that ENCOUNTER should print a letter representing that the Soviet people don't have wash stoppers because they prefer their ablutions in clean, running water. As a result of a Puerto Rican childhood, I have always thought a shower more sanitary than a tub bath; but I grew up to appreciate that in cold countries a hot tub has its advantages. In visiting the Soviet Union I found that the very best and biggest hotels do have stoppers. But stoppers being difficult for the Soviet populace to acquire, they tend to disappear from hotels where Soviet citizens are more likely to lodge.

A further note on Melvin Lasky's article: the leading female part in the film the Soviets have made out of *Ten Days that Shook the World* was given to the US actress Sydne Rome. She has written an interesting and enlightening article in *Paris Match* for May 7 on her experience in working on the movie with Soviets big and little.

JUAN DE ZENGOTITA

*Duxbury*
*Massachusetts*

IN THE FOOTNOTE on p. 88 of your piece (ENCOUNTER, August) you mention the allusions to John Reed as "'the only American' to be buried in the Kremlin." Actually (as I can testify from having visited the site last summer), two Americans—Charles Ruthenberg and "Big Bill" Haywood—are buried in the Kremlin wall, while Reed, along with various Bolshevik notables, is buried alongside (but outside) that wall.

ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR

*City University*
*New York*

## Kolakowski's Economics

THERE ARE so many good points in Leszek Kolakowski's essay on the Social-Democratic idea (ENCOUNTER, February) that I take issue with it somewhat reluctantly. Still, some of the flaws are very serious.

Mr Kolakowski tells us right off that the social-democratic idea "requires the commitment to a . . . publicly supervised economy." While in someone like Marx this particular commitment has its foundation in a theory of human nature (and only when all persons socially participate in the control of what they socially produce will "alienation" be overcome,) in Kolakowski the value of the planned economy is said to derive from "the efficiency of high centralisation." Yet from everything we understand about economics, no evidence can be found of such efficiency. Some activities in a society, e.g., National Defence and Law enforcement, need centralisation, but neither are *economic* activities nor does their value stem from their "efficiency" (but from the requirement that justice and due process of law be pursued). Economic endeavours as such seem never to benefit from "centralised planning", as is shown very clearly by such theorists as F. A. Hayek and Thomas Sowell. Let me try to say why in a few sentences.

Because there are irreducible individual aspects about all human beings, matters which would make different things right and wrong for different people (groups, classes, professions, etc.), very few generalisations are



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possible about what is right for human beings. The few we can identify pertain to matters of justice and law, clearly not to economics. The free marketplace is, however, exceptionally well suited for making the determination of what is right and wrong for people a real prospect. No, it provides no guarantees, and waste, tragedy, misallocation, overpayment, etc., are all possible and will occur (contrary to what "utopian" free-marketeers maintain). But a free market, more than anything resembling a centralised economy in any genuinely economic sphere, makes more probable the discovery of the right answer to the question "What should I produce, consume, save, etc?"

So while I totally agree that we should not aim for some Utopia in coming to grips with our political problems, Kolakowski's commitment to a "publicly supervised economy" is ill-founded, for nothing of value, certainly not "efficiency", stems from the implementation of such an economy.

TIBOR R. MACHAN

*Santa Barbara*
*California*

## Elegant's "Viet Nam"

IN APRIL 1979, while riding from Bangkok to the Thai-Cambodian border to report another Vietnamese "border violation", I listened to a younger colleague as he denounced the Vietnamese Communists in the most strident terms. We had not seen each other for several years, so I was rather surprised at his views.

"Wait a minute", I interrupted. "What happened to the flaming revolutionary I knew in Saigon? You were the most pro-VC, anti-American, anti-War correspondent in the whole damned Press Corps!"

"Ah, yes", he replied with the angelic smile of one who has seen the light. "But that was before I had covered two socialist countries [Cuba and China]."

I thought of that conversation when I read Robert Elegant's piece on "How to Lose a War" (ENCOUNTER, August 1981). Let's suppose that all the correspondents covering the Viet Nam war had been required to serve in at least one Communist country as a pre-condition for their assignment. Would their reporting have been different?

I suspect that if forced to choose between a Communist dictatorship and a military dictatorship—and it was Chairman Mao who said there was no third road—they would have chosen the military dictatorship. At the very least, there might have been a little more balance in their reporting.

Even when the wicked South Vietnamese régime was at its worst, I did not see refugees setting out to sea in leaky boats, many of them to drown or be robbed and see their women raped by pirates. That came only after "liberation."

My point then and now was this: If the Communists could be defeated or held to a draw, there was hope for a change for the better. If the Communists won, there wasn't going to be any second chance. I won't mention Poland or Czechoslovakia.

If I may speak for some other tired "old Asia hands"—and I do so with some trepidation—I think they felt the same way. For the vast majority of American correspondents, Viet Nam was their first war. It was also their first experience outside the United States. To most of them, Viet Nam still is "Asia."

They can hardly be blamed for this. But after 33 years in Asia, including the better part of a decade in Viet Nam, I knew that war was hell long before I got to Saigon. My education in Communism began at the 1940 American Newspaper Guild convention in Detroit and received added touches in Korea, China, Indochina, and Indonesia. I confess to a prejudice against it.

Bob Elegant has been a friend of mine for about 30 years—but a friend with whom I frequently and violently disagree. His premise that the outcome of the Viet Nam War was determined not on the battle-field but by the media—especially television—will be hotly debated.

I don't think I would go quite that far; but the media helped lose the War. Oh yes it did, not because of any massive conspiracy but because of the way the War was reported. What often seems to be forgotten is that the War was lost in the US, not in Viet Nam. American troops never lost a battle; but they never won the War.

Besides, Elegant has Hanoi on his side. Visitors to that miserable, impoverished capital often hear their Vietnamese hosts complain about the hostile press treatment they now receive in comparison with the good old days. Tony Lewis, where are you now that Hanoi needs you?

KEYES BEECH

*Los Angeles Times*
*Bangkok Bureau*
*Thailand*

## Journalism

I AM ASTOUNDED that one of the most thoughtful periodicals in the English-reading world would publish such a piece as that by Edward Alexander on "The Journalists' War Against Israel" (ENCOUNTER, September-October 1982). He has so outrageously misrepresented what I have said about Israeli policy and the Israeli lobby here, that I must assume the other journalists he mentions are similarly maligned. The article is daffy.

ERIC SEVAREID

*C.B.S.*
*Washington, D.C.*

## Wain's "Nightingales"

JOHN WAIN'S account of his journey to Cameroon (ENCOUNTER, November) was witty, charming, and very moving—but when he asks, at the Nachtigal Falls, whether the Germans found nightingales, one must reply that Herr Nachtigal found *them*, the Cameroonians.

Gustav Nachtigal—possibly named after a Teutonic nightingale—was a great 19th-century explorer of Africa. He was sent by the King of Prussia, William I, to "do the Sahara" and he did in fact help, with his "expeditions into the interior", to obtain for the German Empire of the day protectorates in Western Equatorial Africa. Your readers will be interested in what the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (in its latest American edition) has to say:

> "While serving as German consul at Tunis (1882–84), he was sent by Bismarck to western Africa ostensibly to make trade agreements, but secretly to help secure German protectorates over regions now in Togo and Cameroon." (*Micropedia*, vol. VII, p.160).

More than that, according to the German *Brockhaus Encyclopaedi* (vol. 13, p.160), he became in 1884 the first Governor of the Cameroon.

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*Pulborough*

AMERICANISATION: **Top news-reader Peter Donaldson, who lives in Pulborough, answered questions about his job—villagers were keen to know about pronunciations. "I'd prefer to forget rather than remember the variety of names I've got wrong. . . ."**

**"Poland is very much in the news at the moment and we've tended to go in for the Polandisation of names," he said. "Soon, no doubt Paris will be pronounced Paree. . . ."**

**He objected to the Americanisation of news. He said he had recently heard the expression "Down Town Brighton" being used on the local radio station.**

SUSSEX COUNTY TIMES

*London*

BADINAGE: *The best phrase-book I ever had [Terry Wogan writes] was sent me by an old Africa hand, obviously inflamed by my shouting* "Jumbo!" *or some other fiery Kunta-Kinte type expression. The book was designed to help the weary traveller cope with everyday, run-of-the-mill situations among the Swahili speakers of Kopje, kloof and veldt. Starting with "That man is a witch doctor, he has a frog in his pocket," we move pacily on to "Do not expectorate about here!" and "Split the skull and give the brains to the cook."*

*If you have difficulty getting a precise mental picture of the kind of situations that would require such easy badinage, what about:* "Mari haya ya lini? *(How old are these droppings?)" or my personal, all-time favourite:* "Watapala kutionakutoka lapa? *(Can they smell us from here?)". . . .*

*"At the end of the day . . .when you get right down to it in the final analysis" (supply your own telling phrase) the British feel that the only answer when confronted with a foreigner is to speak clearly and distinctly and, if he still doesn't get the message, very loudly.*

B A HIGHLIFE

*London*

HIT SONG & DANCE: *Joan Lestor claimed she was the victim of a "Hard Left" hit list aimed at her and Neil Kinnock in the Labour Party conference election.*

*Miss Lestor said: "They got me off but they failed to remove Neil. This hit list was a result." She added: "When you have hit lists and campaign against people, those of the opposite view do the same to you."*

*Mr Kinnock said: "The removal of Miss Lestor is stupid and wicked. This party has got to have a hit list against hit lists."*

THE STANDARD

*Hanover*

CLASSICAL: *German educators have been increasingly alarmed at the disappearance of the classics like Goethe and Schiller from the school syllabus. For years now they have been trying to restore at least one course which would deal with the plays and poetry of the two German masters. But the best they could achieve is a general recommendation in the newly-issued Guidelines for Schools to the effect that "works from the second half of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th should be read . . ." In a mixture of anger and desperation the representative of the German Philological Society, Dempwolff, violated the confidentiality of German "Abitur" examinations by revealing that a Göttingen grammar school* (Gymnasium) *recorded the following reply by a pupil to the question: "Have you ever heard anything about Schiller?" The (not untypical) answer was: "The only thing I know about the guy* (von dem Typ weiss ich nur) *is that he once wrote something."*

FRANKFURTER ALLEGEMEINE ZEITUNG

*London*

NOBLE ESPERANTO: **"Ci tio estas ia semajno de Esperanto", as an estimated eight million people throughout the world will instantly appreciate. For the millions more who speak English, this is Esperanto Week.**

**Esperanto was invented in 1878 by Ludovik Zamenhof, a Polish physician. As an international language, it has never quite caught on. Unfortunately, it has hardly any literature of its own, and is dependent on translations, such as that of Hamlet posing the most familiar dilemma in English literature:** "Cù esti au ne esti, tiel staras nun la demando." **For eight million adherents, 'tis nobler in the mind in Esperanto.**

THE TIMES

*Glasgow*

CENTRISM: *Before we desert the subject of clichés, have a crack at the weary word centre. On a 15-minute drive into Glasgow one passes the tile centre, carpet centre, design centre, shopping centre, bathroom centre, frozen food centre, DIY centre, garden centres galore, plant hire centre, fashion centre, leisure centre, bed centre, two discount centres, caravan centre, sports centre, and that ultimate nightmare, the central heating centre.*

*What eludes me though, is the word that should take over. There's a cosmetics shop in London beguilingly called* **"The Face Place"**. *Could you have a Frozen Food Place? (But there is a Fish Shop in Dorking called* **"Jim's Plaice."**)

SUNDAY TIMES

*New York City*

**Zzzzz: The dubious achievement of the week belongs to Mr Archimedes Zzzyandottié (could it be dottier?), who has won the distinction of propping up Manhattan's new 4 lb phone book. As the last of 900,000 entries—3,200 of them Smiths—he replaces last year's end-man, a Mr Zzherobrouskikievskieea.**

DAILY MAIL

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Poet, as he is, John Wain might well at the Nachtigal Falls in Cameroon have lyrically thought, not of the song, but the singer.

MORITZ ASSLYN

*Heidelberg*

## Solidarity with Solidarnosc

TWO YEARS AGO, on November 10th, 1980, the Supreme Court of the People's Republic of Poland formally decreed the registration of *Solidarnosc* and approved its statutes. An event of historic importance: for the first time in any Communist country, an independent, self-governing trade union was officially recognised, and both the Ruling Party and the Government pledged themselves to respect and protect the organisation representing nine million workers.

On December 13th, 1981, the same Party and the Government arbitrarily suspended the union and detained its rightfully elected spokesmen. On October 8th, 1982, *Solidarnosc* was banned. This illegal act resulted in street manifestations and strikes.

Due to the support of millions of workers and, in fact, to the will of the Polish nation as a whole *Solidarnosc* LIVES!

However, given the drastic repressive measures against the union, international action is indispensable. YOUR DECLARATIONS OF SUPPORT may vitally influence the future of independent unions in Poland and also in the other Communist countries. Trade union organisations all over the world have a role to play in the defence of basic workers' rights, whose violations are a matter which transcend frontiers. But it is up to you, individual citizens, to persuade your own shop stewards, your own union officials, your parliamentarians, your government, to exert pressure—moral, diplomatic, economic—on those holding power in Warsaw, to

- *lift martial law in Poland*
- *free Solidarity leaders and all political prisoners*
- *restore basic trade union rights as called for by the International Labour Organisation.*

Act now! And support voluntary organisations in your country which provide humanitarian aid to the Polish People.

THE HELP AND ACTION CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE for the Defence of Human Rights in Eastern Europe, PO Box 11, 77850 Héricy, France
INTERNATIONALE GESELLSCHAFT FUR MENSCHENRECHTE, Kaiserstrasse 72, Postfach 2965, D-6000 Frankfurt/Main
THE INTERNATIONAL SAKHAROV COMMITTEE (Copenhagen)

## In Lebanon

I WRITE with reference to the article by Professor Amos Perlmutter which appeared in your issue of November 1982. Contrary to the suggestion therein contained, Professor Perlmutter was not invited to join my Command Post during the recent conflict in Lebanon. All other citations of my name and all quotations attributed to me should be interpreted accordingly.

YANOSH BEN-GAL
*Major-General, Idf*

*Caesarea, Israel*

## Napoleon's Grand Duchy

YOU REPEAT, after *Die Welt* (Bonn), that Napoleon created the Grand Duchy of *Poland* after arriving with Polish legions in the streets of Warsaw (Sept-Oct 1982, p.78).

In fact it was called the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. Napoleon did not wish to antagonise the Czar of Russia by suggesting that he was recreating Poland.

KAROL KROTKI

*Department of Sociology*
*University of Alberta*
*Edmonton*
*Canada*

## Researching Left & Right

YOUR COLUMNIST *M* OBSERVES (ENCOUNTER, March 1982) that to judge from the bibliography of John Tomlinson's book *Left, Right: The March of Political Extremism in Britain*, "the right is far better documented with ten separate studies against only two of the Left." M suggests that if this is so it is because students of politics are themselves Left-of-centre, and the extreme Right is more avid for publicity than the stealthy Left.

There is, however, a more simple explanation for the disparity revealed in Mr Tomlinson's list of books: he has not consulted the available evidence on the Left. He did not for example refer to my own *Revolutionaries in Modern Britain* (Bodley Head, 1976) which provides the most detailed narrative available on the Far Left up to the mid-seventies, and has a bibliography of works by and about the Left vastly more extensive than Mr Tomlinson's entire list. Nor did he look at Ian Greig's *Today's Revolutionaries*, one of the first books on the extreme Left to be published after the upheavals of 1968. The many studies of international and mostly Left-wing terrorism which would have illuminated his later sections appear also to have completely passed him by. One can think of books by Laqueur, Becker, Clutterbuck, Moss, Crozier, Payne, Dobson, Wilkinson; and so on. What is also missing from Mr Tomlinson's list is any indication of the primary sources he used in his research.

One shorter study from which he quoted was my 10,000-word pamphlet on Trotskyism, published in 1977 by the Institute for the Study of Conflict. The number of instances where Mr Tomlinson acknowledges in his text that he drew on this pamphlet is, however, exceeded by the occasions on which he used material from it without reference.

PETER SHIPLEY

*Caterham*
*Surrey*

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# THE ECOLOGIST

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